

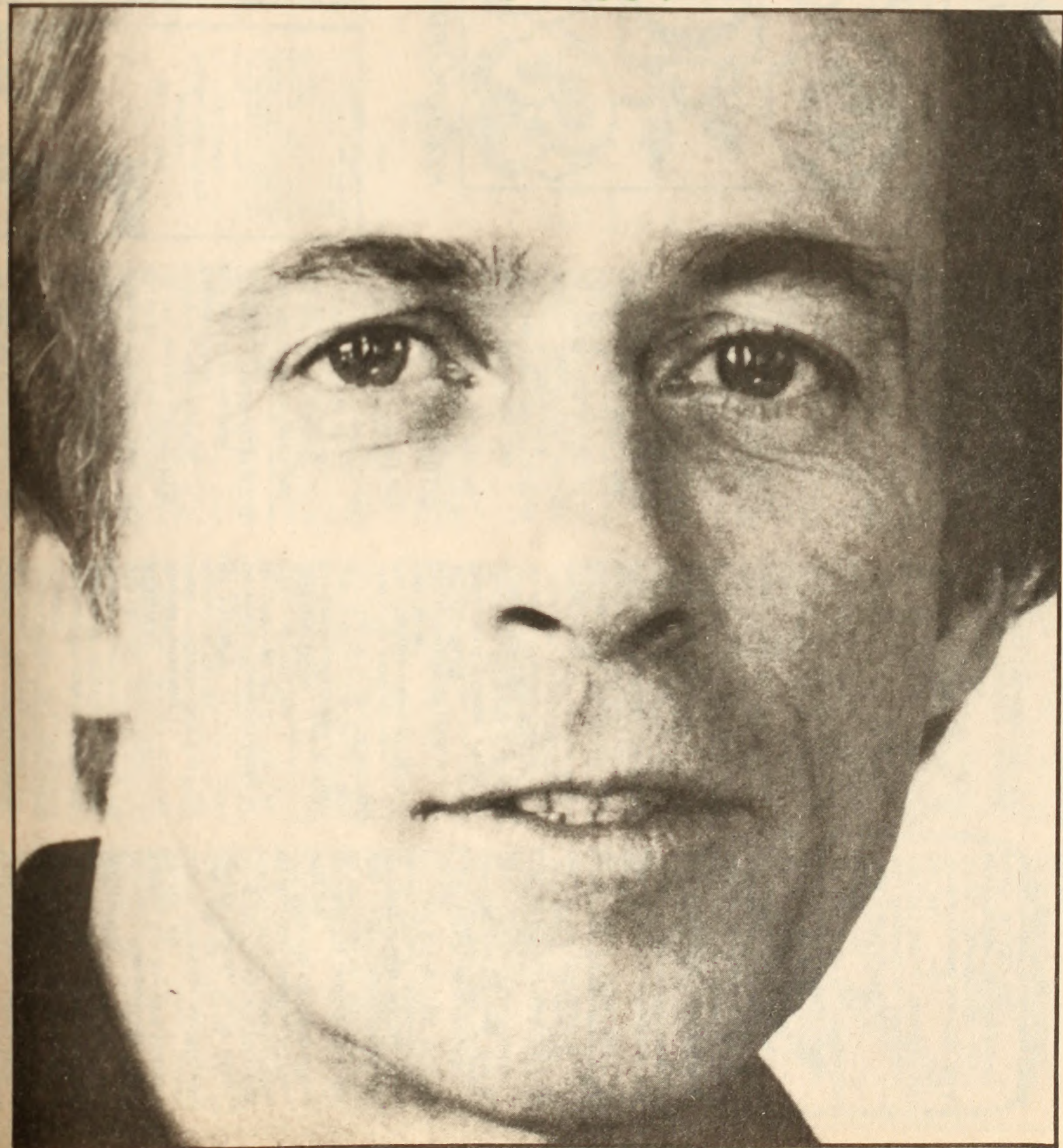
THE **Body Politic** 75¢

OCTOBER '77 **GAY LIBERATION JOURNAL**

Outrageous!: flak for big b.o. flick

Superdyke: the fall of Jill Johnston

Damien's Defence: getting gay back in



Gay Canada is mobilizing for its second national demonstration in less than a year — and its largest to date. On October 21-22, rallies in cities from Halifax to Vancouver will make a point-to-point, gay-in-the-walks of life are determined to be legally protected against job discrimination.

The focus for this demand, of course, is the brave fellow of 44, a former jockey and racing jodel, whose name has become synonymous with the call for job protection for lesbians and gay men. I know his name, reporters in Nova Scotia and social workers in Saskatchewan know it. Labour unions in Quebec have heard it, and you can bet that even the member of Ontario's Tory establishment has too. Right up to Big Bill Davis, his royal self.

The Tories find John Damien because "he was a faggot," and if John, by inviting the gay movement's support, has given all of us a clear focus for our collective struggle, his determination to fight has made those Tony ryers awfully hot under their white collars. John has resisted extraordinary pressure from the Ontario government, both legal and extra-legal. And have they been surprised. In the two and a half years since he launched his suits to the system, they have gone through a series of legal firms, discarding one of lawyers and hiring a more expensive one each time John has shown his determination to fight through to victory.

John's own lawyers have recently mounted another offensive in the pre-trial procedures, and the long slow creep towards the trial has begun to accelerate. Probably during 1978 we will see the trial at last — one for which John and his lawyers will be extraordinarily well prepared.

But as the national gay movement mobilizes for the Days of Protest for John Damien, and as John spends hours with his lawyers going over literally thousands of details in the case, it's ironic that at what should be the centre of the struggle's leadership there is disarray. The body called "The Committee to Defend John Damien," which provided early leadership in the case, is at best fragmented, at worst on the verge of extinction. There's another irony here as well: the very organization that propelled the case into the public eye, and into funds, has failed to set up a structure adequate to the current needs of the case. So the lawyers are active with the legal details, and the movement is active with the political side — but there is no leadership or even significant communication between these two. Indeed, the two have been properly inseparable, and separating them this way has already caused concern.

It seems important that this month, as across the country we take our stand in support of job rights for John and for all other homosexuals, we consider the key issues in the Committee's disarray.

I should begin by describing the disarray as I see it. And by cautioning that although I'm writing in the first person singular, I'm trying to represent the views of a number of persons who've been active in supporting the defence. Furthermore, I'm uncomfortable in speaking about such intricate matters without leaving space to other extensive details. I've had to work here with a number of generalizations that are as true as I can make them.

The disarray is most clearly organizational: a committee that does not function as a committee. But it is more than this, and I will later indicate how this disorganization has been serving a particular view of the nature of gay politics.

Originally, the Committee was composed of gays who wanted to provide funds to fight John's case and lead the public presentation of it in the context of job security for all lesbians and gay men. Beginning from nothing, back in February 1978, this group successfully propelled the case into court and into the public eye. "The Committee," as the first Update Newsletter reported, "consisted of representatives of several gay groups as well as a number of individuals. It had two goals: the reinstatement of John Damien, and the in-

clusion in the Ontario Human Rights Code of the term sexual orientation as a protection for homosexuals against discrimination." It operated informally and membership was defined only in terms of supporting the stated aims of the Committee.

But as support grew, the Committee's original tasks had become far more than a protection for homosexuals against discrimination. The *Weekend Magazine* article on Damien by John Hoffes (February, 1978) supplemented the income from individual gays and gay groups by bringing contributions from persons across the country — a number of whom, I would suspect, are gay, but who do not have to identify themselves with the group. The Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (CGRO) adopted the case as a priority, and at its 1976 conference, the National Gay Rights Coalition (NGRC) did likewise.

The turning point in fundraising came with the NGRC's fabulously successful Operation \$5000 — the late fall of 1976. Groups across the country exceeded their assignments in raising funds to contribute to the defence against Canadian gays had clearly adopted this as more than an individual issue, more than a provincial one. It's one that affects us all.

John's broad base of active support and the concurrent developments in the pre-trial procedures required, one now sees, a more structured defence committee. The Committee has been organized in a way that would permit delegation of powers and responsibilities to various members, that would involve regular discussion of

a general conference last spring, which met twice and did begin to address such issues. But he chose to lead the conference and be a chief disseminator as well. It is telling, perhaps, that although the second of those meetings produced a constitution to give the Committee a clear and democratic organizational structure, the chairperson, as of this writing, has yet to bring that constitution to the Committee for ratification and implementation.

Now, all this noise sounding as trivial as sometimes. Who cares if there's a constitution written down somewhere as long as things are getting done? Problem is, the things aren't getting done — within the Committee. What is happening is happening in the gay movement, or in the lawyers' suits, and this is causing considerable disagreement and frustration.

An editorial in this paper last May made a good point in this respect: "Damien's main supporters, members of the Canadian gay movement, are accustomed to strategic disagreements. But they also know that only a clear organizational structure can hold the group together when the going gets tough." The editorial urged a constitution "that unambiguously defines membership, purposes, and rules of order."

We have to realize why demanding the Committee has been so strongly resisted. It would give the gay movement and its workers greater input. Only when this is clear can we see how the structural disarray has

lawyers.) But Phillips could need "Such work with straight supporters must be entrusted to individuals who are mature and secure enough to recognize in their practice... that the gay movement will get off the ground only when we begin to win with non-gay support (for the blacks, it was white support)." There, we part company, and in this parting, I suspect, is the key issue for the Committee today. Of course we want straight support for John's case, and for the demands we make to the Ontario Human Rights Commission and for job security for all gay people. And we are getting straight support, from some politicians and some civil libertarians and even from the innumerate liberals who find an endorsement no skin off their backs.

What first diffused is the analogy with the black movement, and the statement itself. The biggest problem for both blacks and gays has been winning the commitment of our own people. We are strong minorities, and what victories we achieve come from mobilizing and showing that strength. Gay people can only be mobilized by a clear gay rights perspective. (I also reject the implication that the gay movement has yet to "get off the ground" — but that's a side issue.)

What is central is the question of the role of straight people in the Damien defence. So far this has come in the form of politicians or endorsements. I do not think that these would be diminished if the public image matched the reality. Damien's key support has

Defence to Damien

Do we win "human" rights for gay people only by keeping "gay" in the background? A look at structure — and the politics behind it — in the fight to reinstate John Damien.

by Michael Lynch

all key decisions in the case, and that would give members the chance to keep *au courant* with the legal developments. But that did not occur. The chairperson has retained all powers and responsibilities. No one is certain who is, and who isn't a member. The lawyers have made at least one major decision in the case without any consultation with the Committee membership and without any firsthand explanation to them. Indeed, not one of the lawyers has met with the Committee itself. One year to explain what is happening — and because of the complexity, that kind of meeting is essential.

The disarray in the way of supporting this case for TBP. I have several times telephoned one of the lawyers for a legal update, who has been readily giving it. But I am not — I think — on the Committee.

There have been two issues of the *Update Newsletter* from the Committee — but neither of these has been the product of the Committee itself. Both, speaking for the Committee, have come directly from the chairperson himself, without any prior approval of the group. The chairperson, further, on September 3, issued a widely distributed "Committee to Defend John Damien Report of the Chairperson of the Committee." I said to represent the Committee's point of view.

Any chairperson, of course, may speak for her/himself outside the chair. But the statements have given the impression of having Committee weight behind them. Quite simply, they do not. The Committee has not been granted the responsibility to make decisions or even to discuss the substantive issues. It's a one- or two-person structure.

The Committee's chairperson did call

been a means of promoting a particular view of gay liberation.

That is, this is not just an organizational conflict. It's a debate, often half-buried, over one central issue: the role of organized gays in the gay liberation case.

Terry Phillips, current chairperson of the Committee — or, if my perspective above is accurate, functionally the Committee itself — has been involved with the case since its beginning, when he had been asked to help the CGATE for help. Phillips has worked long, hard hours on the case, both in Toronto and on trips to other cities. He's probably worked much longer and harder than if he had been willing to share responsibilities with other gay activists. He argues that the Committee must be distinct from the organized gay movement in order to attract the support of non-gay persons and organizations who might object to other demands of the movement such as the abolition of the age of consent laws. (In so doing, he ignores the fact that both CGRO and NGRC have obtained considerable support for individual demands of the movement, such as support for the Canadian Human Rights Act, or for the Ontario Human Rights Code amendment.)

But there's more to the position than that — and this seems to me to be the crux of the case. In Phillips' position-paper on the case dated March 7, 1977, he wrote that "non-gay individuals and organizations are being more actively encouraged to participate in the Committee's work. That this is possible, we are now proving in Toronto." (I am not sure to whom this refers, since I've seen no significant amount of work from non-gay people on the case, except for the

come, and will continue to come, from gay people and the organized gay movement across Canada. We do not need to minimize the gay aspects of this case by turning it into a 'lousy' 'human rights' presentation.

A telling illustration of the problems with minimizing the gay content of the case, and with minimizing collective involvement in the Committee itself, is the strange, instructive history of John Hoffes' six-month-old involvement in the Committee. Or, rather, non-involvement.

Hoffes was the person who wrote the important *Weekend* article on Damien — an article so threatening to the Tories that they filed suits for libel against Hoffes, Damien, *Weekend* magazine and the 32 newspapers that carried the article. Our great free press has thus earned its muzzle lift in reporting the course of the case. (I did.)

Volunteering to involve himself more directly in the defence, Hoffes formed a libel appeal committee, a one-person committee called "Solidarity for John Damien" — and set about planning an advertising campaign and a massive telethon that, as he said, in a report, "could be a decisive event in Canadian social history."

A fuller chronicle of this immodest undertaking will make curious reading that — and this seems to me to be the crux of the case. In Phillips' position-paper on the case dated March 7, 1977, he wrote that "non-gay individuals and organizations are being more actively encouraged to participate in the Committee's work. That this is possible, we are now proving in Toronto." (I am not sure to whom this refers, since I've seen no significant amount of work from non-gay people on the case, except for the

Continued on page 11

Editorials

Damien Days of Protest: Time to get back on track

On October 21 and 22, gay people across Canada will be marching, picketing, leafleting, meeting, dancing and raising money as part of the National Gay Rights Coalition's Days of Protest for John Damien.

The *Body Politic* unequivocally supports Damien's struggle. We applaud his courageous perseverance in the fight to restore the job he lost because he is a homosexual. And we urge full support for the Days of Protest; the more people the events involve the more media coverage they will get, and the more our influence will be felt.

TBP has been active in John Damien's struggle since its beginning, helping to build support by publishing articles, interviews, regular news updates and advertisements.

But in recent months we have been making a difficult kind of contribution: circumspiced silence. In the face of mounting evidence that the Committee to Defend John Damien was being undemocratically run and that the input of gay people in this gay fight was being intentionally minimized, our silence has been uncomfortable — but, we felt, strategically necessary. In the name of solidarity with, and with others in the movement who share our reservations, have expressed our feelings not publicly, but in private to people involved in the defence.

This quiet diplomacy has altered nothing, with the Days of Protest imminent, we feel it is time to speak. The entire gay movement should look critically at how the case has been handled up to now and get things going in a healthier direction.

Michael Lynch, in his analysis (beginning on page 1), makes clear that the democratic nature of the Committee has fallen by the wayside. He shows that the committee leadership has taken a "human dignity" approach which downplays the fact that a gay rights issue is at stake. Sometimes the publicity doesn't even mention that Damien is gay.

The implication is clear: some people think that the way to win this case (and gay rights generally) is to soft-peddle our sexual orientation and hope for straight liberal support. Such support is welcome, of course, but our liberation is not going to be won for us through the good wishes of a few prominent heterosexuals.

In taking this "human rights" tack, the media is also doing just what the corporate media has done — making John's firing into the misfortune of one man rather than representative of a whole array of discriminatory acts experienced daily by a substantial minority of people. The straight press would very much like to portray gay homosexuality as an isolated phenomenon and homophobia as the quirk of a handful of people. In doing so they hope to prevent gay people from grasping the extent of our oppression and organizing against it.

The defence committee must be immediately restructured with a constitution, clearly defined procedures and a democratic decision-making framework. The Days of Protest must establish close collaboration between the Damien defence and the gay movement as a whole.

We want Damien's victory to be a victory for all gay people. We're convinced he'll win in court, but that win will be meaningful for us all only if his defence makes it clear at every opportunity that this is a gay rights case, a case of gay people fighting back against anti-gay oppression and bigotry. □

Letters

News Dept. strikes out

Where the hell are you people at? Canada's largest, proudest gay demonstrations to date are almost ignored but you find space for two pages of "Play Ball."

Trash coverage like this we expect from the establishment media, not from our own press.

This news treatment was a betrayal of the thousands of people involved in the gay community and it insulted to the gay community and it makes laughable any claims you make towards objective reporting.

I am furious and I will not forget.

Douglas Gardner
Toronto

The Coalition to Stop Anita Bryant wishes to protest the entirely inadequate nature of your coverage of the demonstrations of June 25 and July 22. You say yourselves that the July 22 demo was "Toronto's largest-ever," and was probably witnessed by more people than any other gay event in the city's history." Why then is your coverage relegated to less than one quarter of a page, and buried in the middle of the paper, when the formation of a gay men's softball league receives a full two pages? It is difficult to think of a gay liberation paper that would not give these events front-page coverage.

This is all the more disturbing in that the demonstrations (and the Coalition) were completely ignored by the straight daily press. Where else do you expect lesbians and gay men (and straight supporters) to get this kind of information if not in the pages of the gay press?

Who participated? What exactly was the impact on spectators? What were the slogans, the chants, the songs at these demonstrations? What was the significance of the response to Bryant's anti-gay crusade? On all this you leave your readers in the dark.

Z/Body Politic

Nothing is said about the Coalition other than to name it. Might it not interest your readers to know that this Coalition represents the largest and broadest mobilization of organizations and individuals in the Toronto gay movement's history?

It is difficult not to suspect that your meagre coverage was motivated by your editorial stance. In the previous issue that nothing could or should be done concerning Bryant unless she should come to Canada — a stance over-whelmingly rejected by the gay community. Tailoring news coverage to reflect TBP editorial biases can only undermine your credibility as a source of reliable information about what is actually taking place in the struggle for gay liberation.

John Wilson,
Coalition to Stop Anita Bryant
Toronto

The text of this letter was passed in its entirety by the Coalition's meeting of September 6, 1977.

Slack pix and sexism

I've enjoyed TBP for a while now, but I must complain about the September '77 issue. A great deal of space was devoted to the article about camp by Richard Dyer, and I am surprised that such a culturally superficial and politically thoughtless article received the collective's approval. I can't criticize the piece point by point in a letter, but I'd like to note that 1. Dyer should do a little research before he assumes gay men have style-and-power; 2. feminists have been telling men for years that hairstyles are about something; one of the forms by which men and their institutions keep women all classes in thrall; and 3. the limp wrist is our best defence, not only misogyny, but reminds me of arguments made by Blacks that Uncle Tomism was and is the best way to keep

together and gain power.

There is a 'politics' to camp, but I think it should be better explored before we all wash the starch out of our wrists.

I was upset too about the baseball game pictures. I'm glad these competitive men have found a way to work up a thirst. Thanks but no thanks. The whole of TBP this past month suffered from a combination of slick pix and sexism. I hope it's not fatal.

Keep up the good work otherwise.

Jeff Weinstein
New York

Baring the facts

What Thomas Waugh refers to as "flag spotting" in his article on Eisenstein in TBP '35 has its roots in something more than a hobby of latter-day "gay cultural historians." In the days before Kinsey and scientific sexual research, the enumeration of lists of famous gays constituted the basis of gay apologetics. It was presumed that the longer the list the better the case could be made that gays are socially productive.

As a method it had its limitations, especially when carried to such excesses as Noel Garde's *Jonathan to Gide* (New York 1964), a biographical dictionary listing "studies of over 300 'homophiles.'" It seemed to satisfy at least every third poet, king, artist, writer, intellectual and statesman was gay. While this assertion has an almost credible statistical basis, most of the citations given have but the sketchiest of historical validation.

I doubt that *Jonathan to Gide* contains a reference to S.M.E. Eisenstein, but Waugh may feel that this is an oversight. I would be the first to agree that Eisenstein's work abounds with homophobia. In fact, I was surprised that Waugh overlooks several scenes from *October*. But beyond internal evidence from the films, we are presented with no other than hints of off-the-record suggestions from various biographers that S.M.E. was gay.

Let's consider *Quo Viva Mexico*, on which Waugh seems to base a large portion of his argument. The script consists of four episodes from successive periods of Mexican history with a prologue and epilogue.

a) *Sandwich* — The coming of age of Conception, her marriage to Abundio, and her Motherhood;
b) *Maguy* — The tragic wedding of Sebastian and Maria, victims of the colonial system of penance;
c) *The Fiesta* — Barron's, the picador, steals from the bullfight to keep a clandestine rendezvous with another's wife, and narrowly escapes death at the hands of the jealous husband;
d) *Soladora* — Tells of the women who follow the armies during the revolution of 1910, and of one such, Pancha, who gives birth to her child at the moment its father dies in battle.

Clearly, four heterosexual episodes. Waugh contends that Eisenstein's portrayals of women "are usually the barest of shadows...walk-ons in a predominantly male universe." Pancha, the Soladora, is perhaps a walk-on in a male universe, but one doubts that she was a shadow. In Ernest Lindgren's study of this film (Wilson, 1961) a still is shown appearing Conception lying bare-breasted in a hammock — bare, yes, but not a shadow and certainly not "androgynous." Almost by itself it destroys Waugh's assertions that Eisenstein was

insensitive to "the softer feminine touches that straight Soviet film-makers gave even to their women machine-guns." Waugh sees too much of his case for his evaluation of Eisenstein's sexual orientation on his distorted conception of S.M.E.'s portrayal of women. He is equating homosexuality with misogyny?

Waugh's case that Eisenstein was gay, even though I think he is correct, rests on his own shaky ground of "adding another feather to our cap" gets in the way of "adding to our knowledge of the history and nature of our oppression, our sexuality and our culture." The kind of cultural journalism in which he has indulged is of little use and, in fact, places in the most suspect of contexts the valid and necessary scholarly efforts underway to recover our history.

Bruce Russell
Vancouver

Herbert defended

Although somewhat unusual, Review Editor Ed Jackson had of course every right to add his long comment to my review of John Herbert's *Some Angry Summer Songs*.

But since Jackson also expressed the rather strong editorial opinion that Herbert is "a bad writer," I feel he should not have cut parts of my review stating a quite opposite critical evaluation to make room for his personal opinions.

For the record (since we are talking about a writer's reputation and livelihood), I thought the farcical *Dinosaurs* "significant for its theatricality, its well drawn characters and dialogue, and the way it would have pleased Oscar Wilde." I added that "the now almost forgotten *Medusa's Blood*, as yet unpublished, undoubtedly represents Herbert's most significant work next to *Fortune* itself. The play's leading character (well played by Jodi Drake in the original production), a black goddess who is stranded in Toronto in the wake of World War II, again reflected Herbert's inability to let his dynamic romantic imagination soar within the confines of the stifling Canadian protestant sensibility. *Medusa's Blood* was John Herbert's *cri de coeur* quipped still by public indifference."

As for Jackson's social-political objections to Herbert's plays, I can only quote playwright-critic George Ryga from the Spring '77 issue of *Canadian Theatre Review* on Herbert's "scandalizing influence on English Canadian playwrights." "A new Canadian theatre came to life with John Herbert's *Fortune* and *Men's Eyes*...social theatre — late in coming, but powerful on arrival...Established theatres did not perform him. But serious playwrights realized what had happened, and the attempt by established theatres to isolate the politicized theatre of Quebec from the rest of the land was only partially successful. The next crop of dramatists in English Canada were no longer apologetics or obscurantists." Finally, my copy stated that Herbert subsidized his *Garret Theatre* in Toronto from 1965 to 1970 with his wages as a waiter — not writer. Another indication of the monetary value our society places on artistic creativity.

Anton Wagner
Toronto

Anton Wagner's review, being a bit longer than commissioned, was edited for one reason only: space limitations. My reply also could have been longer. But I am pleased if Wagner's letter rectifies any distortions which might have unintentionally resulted.

— Ed Jackson, Review Editor

Reviewer apologizes

My apologies to the feminists who produced *Traces: Alberta Women's Poetry*, which I reviewed in the last issue. For my inconvincence it might have caused by being reviewed in a gay liberation paper. I ought not to have been reviewed here. MacNeely's letter (TBP '30) did clarify the error of naming the feminist '77 book "Unpleasant lesbian." I agree, lesbians and feminists are not synonymous.

Judith Grewe
Edmonton



What is normal?

So Peter Worthington and Jimmy Carter claim that homosexual behaviour is not normal. So what? Aren't they right?

There's no need to be offended or up in arms about it. It is useless to try to deny it. What is abominable, however, is to be denied basic civil rights, not to be told that you are not normal.

What purpose would be served by starting a polemic on whether or not gays are normal people?

Everyone is abnormal in one way or another. French is certainly not the "normal" language on a continent of 240 million English-speaking people! Judaism is assuredly not the "normal" religion practiced in Canada, nor is black or yellow the "normal" skin colour of your average Ontarian. Being left-handed is not the "normal" in any society. Picking your nose in public is not the "normal" thing to do anywhere. Even certain WASPs are not safe from being called "abnormal". We mustn't be afraid of the words. We must use them to our advantage. As one can see, it is quite easy to find virtually anyone to be "abnormal".

We must ask our enemies if not being the "normal" is a reason to deny people basic civil rights. If so, we might as well do away with human rights altogether.

But until we reach such a situation where all "different" people are stripped of their rights, we shouldn't worry about being called "abnormal". We should instead shout with pride: *Vive la difference!*

Yvon Thivierge
Hull

Outpost of Empire

I always used to pity those voices crying out in the wilderness in your letters section, but now that I find myself on one of them my point of view has considerably altered. I have now settled in Victoria, where there is only one newspaper that stocks TBP. I find myself almost salivating as I rush towards it, hoping

that a new issue will be in the rack right beside the front door.

In recent issues, I enjoyed the story on Michael Silverstein as well as the article about gay actors and themes at Stratford. As usual, I also really enjoyed Michael Rordon's column; his writing is very good, clear, and well-controlled, and his ideas are so very close to my heart. I just wish I had the deftness of expression with which he is blessed.

Love to you all!
Stephen Moysse
Victoria



For Meg

Our mistakes

Photo credits for some of the illustrations for "Actors and Shakespeare and Stratford and Us" in TBP 35 were unintentionally omitted. The three upper photos on page 23 and the one photo on page 24, right, should have been credited to Robert Ragsdale. In the bottom row of photos on page 25, the three photos should have been credited to Douglas Spillane (left), Zoe Dominic (centre), and Robert Ragsdale (right).

The first two lines of the final stanza of Eric Gordon's "Ballad of Anita Bryant" (TBP 35, page 12) should have read: "Oh, sister-loving brothers, you've listened to my song 'Oh, brother-loving sisters, you too must come along."

CONTENTS

No. 37, October, 1977
The liberation of homosexuals
can only be the work
of homosexuals themselves."
Kurt Hiller, 1921

Defending Damien

1

by Michael Lynch

Gay people and the Committee to Defend John Damien — how involved are we? How visible are we allowed to be? An account of the issues at stake for us all in this complex mix of the legal and the political.

Laid Back on Castro

13

by Gary Ostrom

The truth of the pose is hard to hide from Ostrom. A page of concentrated tatting from the street of San Francisco — as we all know, "everybody's favorite city."

Outrageous Images

14

By Michael Rordon

Critics adore it, straighten it out, deny it. Even the gay press has fallen into its arms. But Michael Rordon argues with the success of Richard Benner's new film by asking some pointed questions about images. And their effects.

Jill Johnston's Fall

16

by Gwen Hauser

The author of *Lesbianation* came to Toronto and mastered her audiences. But she also dismayed them by her retreat from feminism into "karma" — and paranoia.

In the news

4

Damien Days of Protest planned nationwide. CGRO steers for OHRC revision. Conferences slated for Quebec and Halifax. Toronto media squeal gay ads; Hoyt honks on. Bad press in Vancouver, better in Hamilton. And gay television all over.

In the reviews

17

Peter Millard looks at gay artists from Saskatoon. Stuart Russell digs into LSA essays on gays and socialism. Also Rick Babout on Quentin Crisp; Stephen Murray on God. Words by Jean Kowalewski, music by Ilona Laney, choreography by Graham Jackson. Ian Young wraps it up with "The Ivory Tunnel."

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

Editorial.....	2	Flaunting It.....	12
Letters.....	2	Trash.....	24
Ivory Tunnel.....	22	Classifieds.....	25
Community Page.....	27		

• Cover photo of John Damien by David Gibson, ANSCAD •

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The pink triangle

During the Third Reich in Germany, the Nazis developed a simple and effective system for identifying the various undesirable and "enemies of the state" imprisoned in concentration camps. Each group had to wear an identifying symbol sewn to its clothing. One group was singled out by a pink triangle worn point down on the left arm of the jacket and on the right pant leg.

These were the homosexuals. Tens of thousands wore this symbol to their deaths in the gas chambers and forced labour camps of Nazi Germany.

We wear the triangle as a symbol of the history that other hands have tried to obliterate. It is also a reminder of where gay oppression can lead if gay people neglect the active struggle for their rights.

Please send me _____ pink triangle pins.
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Ontario

CGRO sets strategy for Code change

The drive to put sexual orientation into the Ontario Human Rights Code dominated discussions at the Labour Day week and meeting in Windsor of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario.

About thirty persons attended the meeting, hosted by Windsor Gay Unity. Media coverage was provided by the *Windsor Star* and the local CBC television affiliate.

The meeting adopted a comprehensive new strategy for getting protection for lesbians and gay men into the Human Rights Code following release of the recent report of the Ontario Human Rights Commission urging inclusion of the term "sexual orientation" in the anti-discrimination provisions of the Code.

The CGRO efforts will be in three stages. Beginning immediately, the Coalition will approach community and civil liberties groups, professional associations, trade unions, churches, women's groups and other organizations urging them to write Government leaders and local MPP's in support of the Human Rights Commission's proposal. Preparation and distribution of materials outlining the need for such an amendment was also called for.

The second stage will begin with the convening of the Legislature in October. CGRO plans to submit a new brief to the Legislature and will initiate meetings with Government leaders, the three party caucuses and individual MPP's to obtain support for the sexual orientation proposal.

Finally, the Coalition will hold rallies and demonstrations in support of the proposal at the time the Government introduces its revised human rights legislation.

CGRO also investigated aspects of the Human Rights Code which could be revised to make it a more effective piece of legislation.

In particular, CGRO called for the removal of all "bad idea" exception provisions of the Code and the removal of provisions requiring ministerial permission before boards of enquiry may be established. This latter demand relates to Labour Minister Bill Stephenson's refusal to permit a Human Rights Commission enquiry into the firing of John Damien.

The CGRO groups committed themselves to participating in the National Gay Rights Coalition Days of Protest for John Damien in October. Commitment was also given to participating in NGRC co-ordinated national and provincial petition campaigns calling for the inclusion of sexual orientation in all human rights legislation.

A discussion of the media coverage of the recent murder of a 12 year-old shoeshine boy in Toronto was held to determine what further action

CGRO could take to counter the stereotypes of the media in reporting on this case. Delegates agreed to launch a formal complaint with the Ontario Press Council against the Toronto Star and to protest the hysteria-generating report of the Toronto Sun. A complaint against a Toronto radio station is also contemplated; procedures for submitting complaints to the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) are to be investigated.

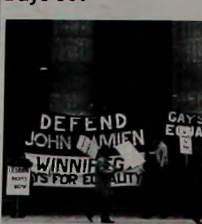
The John Damien case became a topic of great controversy during a two-day meeting following criticisms by some delegates of the manner in which the defence effort is being conducted.

The Coalition established a special committee of five persons to determine the historical development of the case and to determine the relationship between CGRO, the John Damien Foundation, and the Committee to Defend John Damien (see article beginning on page 1). This committee is to report to the next Steering Committee meeting.

by Tom Warner

National

Damien Protest Days set



Fulfilling a mandate of the Saskatoon Conference, the National Gay Rights Coalition (NGRC) has called for a nationwide protest for John Damien on Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22. The Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE) Toronto is acting as national co-ordinator for the coast-to-coast public protest.

Lesbians and gay men will demonstrate with three demands: 1) human rights legislation to protect homosexuals; 2) job security as a gay right and 3) the reinstatement of John Damien.

Damien will be present at Protest Days events in Edmonton and possibly in other cities to highlight the moves by local groups to publicize his struggle.

Those wishing more information about the National Days of Protest should contact their local NGRC member organization (see ad on page 10) or GATE Toronto at 193 Carlton Street, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2K7.

by David Gibson

RCMP still keeping files on gays

The media have uncovered further evidence that the RCMP keeps files on alleged homosexuals in the public service.

This was revealed in August by the

Toronto *Globe and Mail* in the course of a series of stories on personal files being kept by the RCMP on prominent politicians.

The gay movement has had many indications in the past that the RCMP was keeping records on homosexuals. The *Globe* story provided additional proof.

The paper cited Superintendent J.R. Benham of the RCMP as saying that the files on homosexuals are classified under "character weakness." "Supt. Benham confirmed that... if somebody applied for a job in the forces and he was found to be a homosexual, he would be placed in 'character weakness' files," The *Globe* said in its latest story.

The *Globe* also reported that the RCMP pays informants "millions of dollars" to gather information on "people regarded as potential security risks" and that "the Mounties make widespread use of prostitutes and homosexuals, who are among their many informants."

The National Gay Rights Coalition (NGRC) issued a press release calling on the federal government and the RCMP to stop the practice of keeping files on gay people. The *Globe and Mail* reported the release, but other media ignored it.

"Homosexuals can only be security risks if they attempt to hide their sexual orientation," said NGRC spokesperson David Garmise. "It is the government itself that encourages homosexuals to remain in hiding by its policies in the RCMP and the Armed Forces and by refusing to make clear statement that homosexuals will not be discriminated against in the public service."

NGRC has received a letter from Solicitor General Francis Fox reiterating that "an individual's sexual orientation does not prevent the individual from obtaining employment in the federal government or from obtaining a security clearance."

"Why then," Garmise asks in the press release, "is the RCMP keeping files on gays? The RCMP is part of the federal government. Will it hire a person it knows is homosexual?"

"Fox's assertion is questionable in the light of RCMP practices," Garmise said.

As a top police repression against gays.

coming national Congress must call for such a coalition.

In addition, the National Gay Rights Coalition Day of Protest for John Damien will be marked by a street demonstration on October 15 and will demand:

- The inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the Quebec Human Rights Charter, and in the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- The reinstatement of John Damien
- A stop to police repression against gays.

On the language question, ADGD has proposed that the official language of the congress be French. However, when an intervention is made in English, oral translation will be available. If necessary, an anglophone caucus might be held.

In a related development, representatives from 15 Montreal-area gay and lesbian groups met August 15 to discuss problems of communication and lack of unity. But the only accomplishment of the meeting was the plan to create a "communications system" which "will be used to mobilize the community if events warrant," according to a newsletter of Gay Info, a phone-in and counselling service. Another meeting is planned for November 14.

In the meantime, for further information about the First National Congress, contact the Comité des Communications, ADGD, CP-36, Succ. C, Montreal, Quebec, H2L 4J7. Phone: (514) 843-8671. A full report on the congress will appear in the December *T&P*.

by Stuart Russell

1978 Conference to be held in Halifax

The Gay Alliance for Equality of Halifax will host the 6th Annual Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men. The announcement was made in Saskatoon on July 3 at the final plenary of the 5th Annual Conference. The 1978 conference will take place on the Canada Day weekend, from Wednesday, June 28 through Sunday, July 2, leaving July 3 a holiday, for the final meeting of the NGRC Steering Committee, a press conference and return travel by delegates. It is hoped that this will prevent a recurrence of the situation at this year's conference where some delegates had to leave the final plenary early to catch flights home.

The Co-ordinating Office of the NGRC will decide by January 1 whether to provide translation facilities at the conference. This decision will be based on consultation with Quebec gay groups at the first national Quebec gay conference in October and with GAE if a bilingual conference is to be held.

The GAE has committed itself to providing full translation facilities, bilingual services and translation of all documents. Plans for the conference include a discussion on abortion, workshops on gender reassignment (sex change) and police repression, and a full cultural program. The NGRC will operate a travel equalization fund to cover travel costs for one delegate per member group, as well as a representative of the Co-ordinating Office.

by Robin McLea

Farewell to Anita



Anita Bryant has been squeezed out of Canada's ads for Florida orange products. She is being replaced by Canadian-born singer Catherine McKinnon.

The switch is attributed to a Canadian Radio and Television Commission ruling calling for 75% Canadian content in commercials shown in Canada. Roy Madden of Gordon Will Advertising, the Toronto agency handling the Florida Commission's account claims the switch has nothing to do with Bryant's anti-gay crusade.

"We decided on the switch to McKinnon a year ago," said Madden. "But with time that's happened recently, the timing looks bad."

McKinnon is of out town and could not be reached for comment.

Halifax

Halifax to host first Atlantic conference

The Gay Alliance for Equality has announced that the First Annual Atlantic Gay Conference will be held in Halifax on the Thanksgiving weekend, October 8 through 10. The conference will be open to all lesbians and gay men in the

October

four Atlantic provinces (New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island).

The Atlantic Provinces Political Lesbians for Equality (APPLE) will co-operate with the GAE in hosting the conference, which will include political workshops and cultural events. Activities will take place at Hal's new Gay Community Centre, the Turret. Baiting will be available for those attending. Further information may be obtained by contacting the GAE or APPLE.

by Robin Metcalfe

Women zap Turret painting

On the evening of Sunday, July 24, a group of eight women spray-painted over a wall mural in the Turret, the Gay Community Centre operated by the GAE of Halifax. The painting depicted two sets of female breasts with an electric current running between two nipples and surrounded by a scroll of lipstick.

The mural, nicknamed "the Tits," had been painted in the course of general renovations to the Turret during the Saskatoon conference. The artist, Randy Murray, had offered to paint a series of gynoids and canvases for the Turret for the cost of materials. The GAE did not examine preliminary sketches before the work was executed.

"It's another example of male perception and objectification of women's sexuality," said Ava Greenstein, a local lesbian laborer and member of APPLE. "I came in here to would represent my own sexuality. I would never represent a man's sexuality. The whole idea is foreign to me."

Reaction to the spray-painting ranged from angry shock to enthusiastic support. John Mar, a member of GAE, called it "wanton destruction of property." Bob Slout, manager of the Turret, said, "I certainly agree with the women in principle, but I felt that if it first should have been discussed at a general meeting before the zap took place." Most GAE members indicated that they objected to the painting and that it should have been removed.

At a heavily-attended meeting of the GAE on August 3, a member asked that the women involved in the incident be banned from the Turret. The motion was strongly defeated. The women, including members of GAE and APPLE who had participated in GAE demonstrations, presented a position paper defending their action.

"The mural essentially denotes women's breasts as sex symbols, which is an extension of the Playboy image of women as tits and ass, in other words, sex objects. Add to that a style of painting which portrays women's bodies in a fantasy form unrelated to female physiology. To us it is not a meaningful symbol but a parody of the worst aspects of stereotypes about women and lesbians."

The painting was the embodiment of an attitude which is oppressive to us—which is in direct opposition to our struggle. We had no reason to remove it, therefore reacted to a blatant insult with a forceful response. We also felt it was necessary to communicate the depth of our rage in response to the attitude the painting symbolizes. If the wall had been quietly painted over there would have been no opportunity to publicly express

the depth and nature of this insult. "Our action in no way indicates disrespect for the GAE aims or activities or unwillingness to work in the organization."

As a result of the lengthy discussion, the GAE resolved to engage in self-education and education outwards into the gay community around the issue of sexism and to work to ensure greater public access to the GAE as a democratic forum.

by Robin Metcalfe

Toronto Globe rejects book store ad

The *Globe and Mail* has refused to publish a display book ad from Toronto's gay bookstore, Glad Day Books. It was rejected by the publisher himself, Brigadier Richard S. Malone, with no explanation given beyond that he "preferred not to publish it."

The quarter page ad, organized by Glad Day Books in conjunction with seven publishers, was to have appeared in the Saturday book review section of the *Globe*. The paper is considered to be a major forum for book news in Canada.

Retail Advertising Manager Ross Macdonald says that Glad Day submitted the ad with all references to lesbian and gay changed to homosexual. The revised ad was also refused without explanation. The copy was, in the words of Glad Day representative Gord Montador, "pretty innocuous."

Gay books from Bantam, Avon, Oxford University Press, Holt Reinhart and Winston, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Thomas Allen and Pink Triangle Press were publicized in the ad.

Support within the publishing world is growing. The Canadian Booksellers' Association, the Canadian Book Publishers' Council, the Association of Canadian Publishers, the Writers' Union of Canada, the League of Canadian Poets and the Book and Periodical Development Council have all promised to protest The *Globe's* decision.

If The *Globe and Mail* does not alter its position in the wake of such pressure, Glad Day Books intends to file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission and to step up its campaign of public protest.

by David Gibson

Radio station vetos gay ad

Q107, Toronto's new "FM All Rock" radio station, on August 12 rejected an advertisement from *The Body Politic* on the grounds that "at the present time, publicizing gay issues in this manner is not in the best interests of either the advertiser or the radio station."

At first for a series of thirty-second spots had been contracted by TBP on July 5. At that time, Q107 sales representative Vivienne Flack saw no potential problem in accepting advertising from a gay newspaper. Rejection of the ad was decided upon after the station's top-level management after

the media assault on the gay community which followed the July 29 murder of Emanuel Jaques above a Yonge Street Body Rub parlor.

The position of Q107 on gay issues has, up to this time, generally been positive. TBP was assured that such editorial support would continue, but that "it must be done right" for advertising "in these areas where we do not have the opportunity to clarify our position or note an opinion." In addition to "public sensitivity," station executives cited the words "lesbian" and "gay" in the ad copy, feeling that these might be offensive to their audience.

The *Body Politic* is to submit a complaint to the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission and to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and will seek damages from Q107 to cover the cost of order forms and the phone line installed to deal with the radio campaign.

by Rick Bédouit

"Assault" suspect release sparks Native protest

Less than a month after the Toronto media's sensational news coverage of the death of Emanuel Jaques, a second case of "homosexual assault" made the pages of the papers.

Two men have been charged with indecent assault and gross indecency in the "assault" of a 14-year-old Native employee of the Yorkville Galleries on Bloor Street in downtown Toronto. One was also charged with buggery. During the "assault" the boy called his mother telling her what was happening to him. She called the police, then called back the gallery to tell the two men to leave her son alone. According to the Toronto Sun, the boy "had been sexually abused numerous times in the past two years."

Since their arrest, the pair have been released without bail, pending trial. Coverage in most of the press has been generally restrained. The identity of the boy has not been released, thus preventing an emotional personalization of the case as the "young shoe-shine boy," Emanuel Jaques.

The Toronto Sun has been the exception, although it never featured the story prominently. The paper is trying to keep the emotional issues alive with editorials like "Vile Crimes" which appeared on September 6, in commenting on the release of the two suspects, the *Sun* states, "Crimes of perversion are, in our view, the vilest of all. Society should not be jeopardized by unleashing people who may have weird, uncontrolable appetites that are slaked or satisfied by violating children." Two days later *Sun* columnist Claire Hoy continued his assault on the growing support for gay rights in Ontario. In a follow-up to the editorial, the *Sun* carried a story about the numerous calls it received agreeing with its position.

One of the mainstays of the hysteria generated by the Toronto Sun was a demonstration held by The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto at Queen's Park, following the release of the two suspects.

A press release distributed at the picket read "We protest the inconsistencies of judicial system which incarcerates Indians on minor offences and which allows two men to be released on such serious crimes against a human being." A placard asked, "where is the media when Emanuel is Native?"

Two of the four suspects in the Jaques murder case were denied bail pending their trial. All four remain in custody.

Gay activists in the city noted their support for the Native People's fight against unequal treatment by the judicial system. But they questioned the comparison between the Jaques murder and the alleged "assault" on Bloor Street.

"Using homophobia to attack racism in the courts is simply trading off one bigotry for another," said one gay spokesperson.

by David Gibson

Press accuses gay activists of Jaques murder

Peter Worthington, editor of the Toronto Sun, has tried to link gay activists with the alleged murder of Emanuel Jaques, a 14-year-old Toronto boy (see issue 36 for details).

In COLUMN ON August 15, Worthington said that "in the Emanuel Jaques case it is not 'decent' homosexuals who should feel threatened, but the depraved ones who give homosexuality a bad name and who seem anxious to gain recruits, create a new 'normality,' and who thirst for political power."

Like Anita Bryant, Worthington speaks of "recruiting" when he refers to the movement's encouragement of gay people to come out. Combating the idea that gays are abnormal, and building gay political power have long been key aims of the gay movement.

Worthington's column was reprinted one week later in the *Fredericton Daily Gleaner*.

The article's accusation that the organized gay community is responsible for the murder appeared more gleefully in the *Markham (Ontario) Evening Star* and *Saskatoon Star*. In *Gambie*, Federal Progressive Conservative candidate in York North, noted in a guest column that the murder occurred within three miles of Toronto's CHAT Centre. He speculated that the alleged murderers lived nearby because it was "convenient" to them, and that Jaques had regularly walked by the Centre.

CHAT, Gambie wrote, "publicly displays the purpose of its existence. Hurred within three miles of Toronto's office, the accused might never have located where they did and might never have met the Jaques boy."

The extremity of these statements was also characteristic of a Toronto Sun column by Claire Hoy on September 6. After an attack on "fags" in general, and TBP in particular, Hoy concluded that "homosexuals are responsible for making their case with the politicians." But it enough people out there let their elected members know they've had enough, then the politicians will stop making queens walk off scurrying back to their quarters."

by Michael Lynch
(For more from the Sun, see Trash, p. 24)

Bryant coalition focuses on culture

The Coalition to Stop Anita Bryant will celebrate Oscar Wilde's Birthday with a day-long festival Sunday, October 16, the 123rd anniversary of Wilde's birth.

In an effort to focus on gay culture and the work that gays are doing in the community, the Coalition is calling upon both gay artists and activists to be present at the festival. It hopes to organize a show of the work of gay artists and to have booths from the Ontario gay organization and to explain their work and activities. Artists are being asked to submit works for the show, and the gay groups are being asked to organize seminars and workshops.

A benefit performance of the new British film *Sebastiane* will be held at the time of the festival to help finance the work of the Coalition and to contribute to the John Darnley campaign.

The Coalition to Stop Anita Bryant was formed in Toronto in the wake of the anti-gay victory in Dade County last June. It grew out of a series of well-attended meetings held at that time. The energies of the group were primarily focused on the planning of two highly successful demonstrations in the city. Together they brought more than 1000 people into the streets to protest Anita Bryant's anti-gay bigotry. The second demonstration was the largest in the city's history.

Once immediate interest in the Bryant issue had died down, the momentum of the Coalition slowed. The Oscar Wilde Birthday Party is to be a tangible evidence of its continued existence.

(Continued on page 7)

Body Politic/5

Outrageous!

Rex Reed Says "It's a marvelous, fresh, touching film with heart-tugging insight and compassion, and most definitely the season's major, unheralded surprise. This one is a gem."
—*N.Y. Daily News*

The Village Voice Says "Marvelously witty and exhilarating. For once I really believed a star was born. Craig Russell's mimetic routines are such revelations in their symbolism and insight that one's ritualistic 'compassion' for a supposed sub-culture gives way to unabashed admiration." —*Andrew Sarris*

N.Y. Daily News Says "The funny, wise, compassionate film is mainly concerned with human beings and their hunger for self-respect and some kind of love. In its simple, delightfully unaffected way, it manages to touch the heart." —*Kathleen Carroll*

The L.A. Times Says "The Canadians have made another show of creative force... a rewarding work that will travel well." —*Charles Champlin*

The Montreal Star Says "Could Outrageous be Canada's answer to Rocky?" —*Marion Mahon*

Outrageous!

Variety Says "Outrageous is an easy box office winner. The good fun will draw any public."
—*Ron Hollingsworth*

Cosmopolitan Says "A tender, touching, engrossing, exotic love story. A very special experience for special people who love to laugh, cry and forgive others their madness. Just as New York accepts and cradles these two, I hope you'll do the same with this beguiling, enlightening movie. 'Outrageous' is the word for those bringing us 'Outrageous'." —*Liz Smith*

Soho News Says "Should be one of the most important movies to hit New York this year. It's the movie about why we're all here and functioning, and it's superb." —*Rob Baker*

Cue Magazine Says "From start to finish, 'Outrageous' is outrageously different. It's a vital, daring and immensely likeable film. Its exuberance is reminiscent of the freshness marking the British films that expressed the surge of changing attitudes in the 1960's." —*William Wolf*

After Dark Says "A far-out 'in' movie, 'Outrageous' draws a bead on our overly structured society and shoots its clichés and misconceptions to hell and back. A film with valid premise, biting dialogue, and characters that find their way easily into a viewer's heart."
—*Norma McLain Slopp*

Out rage ous!

Outrageous!

Opening in Toronto on September 30 at the Orion York I

Coming soon to theatres across Canada — Watch your local paper

RECOMMENDED AS
ADULT ENTERTAINMENT

WARNING: Some material may be
unsuitable for children
— Theatrical Branch of Ontario

Opinions on the future direction of the Coalition differ. Some in the group would like to continue working on an open-ended, issue-oriented basis, channeling energies into issues as they come. Others seek to form a political action group with a constitution and a specific set of aims and strategies.

The direction of the Coalition is to be discussed at upcoming meetings of the members.

The location of the October 15 events is still undecided. Those wishing further information on the Wilde Festival or who would like to help out or participate can call Chuck Wheeler at 461-9744.

by David Gibson

Vancouver

Province pushes police to persecute gay prostitutes

Vancouver police vice officers are preparing a report on gay prostitutes in the residential west end district, according to one local newspaper. The story broke in the homophobic Vancouver Province newspaper in the wake of the Toronto media's sensational coverage of the Emanuel Jaques murder.

Acting Superintendent of Police, Vic Lake, labelled news reports of 200 boys prostituting themselves as "sensationalism," but said, "we are aware this is becoming a problem and we will try to put it to stop before it grows."

The Province claimed that police fear an occurrence similar to the murder of the shoeshine boy in Toronto. Gordon Bader, an officer who has a liaison between police and the gay community, was reported as saying that Vancouver is recognized as a major centre for juvenile prostitution. Apparently, boys are "recruited" in Vancouver and "shipped" to gay men in New York and Los Angeles.

The Province also maintained that most of the boys engaged in drug pushing, theft and other crimes. Pimps, it said, started to move in, but the boys are largely transient and will leave town if pressured.

The newspaper also solicited the opinions of a number of "professionals" who confirmed the "crippling psychological effects" of hustling.

The Vancouver gay movement is currently battling the local media in the Supreme Court of Canada over its right to advertise gay publications and activities.

by Al Dunning

Guelph

Guelph gets ready

Ending a summer lull in activities, Guelph Gay Equality (GGE) has put out a call for participation in the gay weekend festival in that city. Events to continue this fall are the Gayline, drag shows and the monthly dances as well as the ongoing work of various committees. Help and ideas will also be required for the TV project that GGE is undertaking with Guelph Cable TV.

The success of the regular dances is critical to the group's continued existence, as they are the main source of funds. Gays in the Guelph area are urged to attend and to lend a hand. GGE is also encouraging people to use the Courtyard Tavern (in downtown Guelph) as an informal gathering spot on Wednesdays when there is no regular meeting of the group.

The group may be contacted through its address on the Community page (page 27) of this issue.

by David Gibson

Cable TV to discuss sexuality

Viewers of Guelph's community television outlet, Cable 8, should soon be able to watch a program on the topic "Human Sexuality: A Discussion of Alternatives."

The half-hour program, which may lead to a series of similar productions, was a cooperative effort of Guelph Gay Equality (GGE) and Guelph Cable 8.

Panelists in the discussion are Earl Reide, anthropologist and assistant professor at McMaster University, and Joyce Aschwith, social worker and assistant professor of psychiatry at the Medical Centre, McMaster University. The program, they look at the wide range of human sexuality — heterosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality. The two panelists also discuss the various myths of sexual orientation and the homosexual as child molester, and touch on the topics of sexual repression and the various definitions of "normal."

The discussion was moderated by Ger Brinder & Brandis and produced by Jim Dougan, both of Guelph Gay Equality.

GGE is hopeful that the program will be passed by the Guelph Community Television Advisory Council, which screens all cable TV material.

by Barry Erksen

St John's

City's first gay bar opens

The social life in Newfoundland's capital has had a boost with the opening of the city's first gay bar, the Upper Deck, at 208 Water Street. The opening night of the new bar, which featured a drag show, was met with great enthusiasm by the gay community.

The owners of the Upper Deck say they will turn the place as a gay bar as long as they get enough gay patronage. Two other clubs in the city frequented by gays, the Sea Breeze and the Waterfront, do not want to be categorized as gay establishments.

The Community Homophile Association of Newfoundland (CHAN) has been, by contrast, a difficult year. Participation in the group has been sporadic and finances tenuous. Recently three members of the executive resigned or were forced to resign, leaving a vacuum of leadership.

CHAN will look to its members for pledges of money to put the group on a sound financial footing and the start of the university year for new participants in the organization.

by Wish Leonard

United States



One thousand marched on the United Nations in New York August 20 to demand "Lesbian and Gay Rights Now." Organized by the National Lesbian and Gay Political Action Committee, and supported by over 60 groups and individuals, the demonstration went from Washington Square to Greenway Village to Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza in a militant display of gay pride. Demonstrators came from as far away as Chicago, Toronto, Montreal, France and Germany. Speakers at the rally included Stuart Russell, representing the Association pour le Droit des Gays de Québec. Similar protests took place in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Indianapolis.

Rochester rights commission tackles gay discrimination

After Dade County gays lost their civil rights in the June referendum, gay people in the Rochester area moved closer to protection against discrimination. After months of effort which included briefings, letters, phone calls, meetings and presen-

tations by the movement in Rochester, the Monroe County Human Relations Commission (MCHRC) accepted some of the demands of the local activists and agreed to accept complaints from gays who have experienced discrimination.

The MCHRC was established in 1961 under legislation that did not list the types of discrimination that the Commission could investigate (sexual, racial, etc.). Instead, it has broad discretion to tackle discrimination wherever it occurs. It does not have power to do much more than investigate and mediate in disputes, however.

After three years of unsuccessful pressure for city and county ordinances to ban discrimination against gays, local activists decided to approach the Commission. Here the problem was not to change the law, but to convince the commissioners that anti-gay discrimination occurs and that it is their business to try to stop it.

The effort to do this began in February of this year when Tim Mains, of the Rochester Gay Task Force (RGTF), got an appointment with Loftus Carson, Director of the MCHRC, to press for the Commission's support for gay rights. Carson urged RGTF to put everything in writing and by March a letter had been drafted making ten requests for immediate and long-term action.

The approach to the Commission staff was supplemented by lobbying at the state capital, and by the appointment of an open gay to the MCHRC. The signatures of local clergy were also sought for an "ecumenical statement" supportive of gay rights.

One hundred people ultimately signed it. None of this got very far. In April RGTF and its badgeing Carson for a response to its letter and was refused a request to appear before the Commission in May, when it was to be considered. The same negative response came from Alan Heuer, Commission Chairperson, when he was approached directly.

Tired of the MCHRC's evasions and delays, gays decided to leaflet the Commission's annual dinner, asking "Is the Monroe County Human Rights Commission anything more than a counter-intellectual?" The next day Heuer wrote to Tim Mains to "suggest" that he "might wish to make a direct presentation to us at our next meeting."

The RGTF set to work again and produced a twenty-minute presentation asking that the Commission accept complaints of discrimination against gays, that a "Task Force on Gay Concerns" be established to gather information on the problems of gays in Monroe County, and that an openly gay person be given a Commission seat.

By this time the local press had picked up the issue. The Dade County battle was underway and gay rights were receiving national attention. Editorials in both the papers endorsed gay rights (with the usual equivocations around the issue of gay teachers) and supported the idea that the MCHRC should deal with its problem against anti-lesbians and gay men.

In mid-July the Commission finally yielded. It agreed to accept complaints from gays, to set up a Human and Gay Rights Committee, and to keep records of the complaints to increase "understanding of these problems" in Monroe County.

Gays are justifiably pleased and are getting out information as widely as possible on the machinery for filing complaints. Many wells of the RGTF argues that the "rush for administrative rather than legislated policy statements avoids the possibility of Dade County-type referendums." But there is disappointment that no task force was set up.

The task force is particularly necessary says Mains, because "few gay people feel sufficiently confident to challenge a racist system that is stacked against them." In these circumstances a study of local discrimination against gay people is necessary if the Commission is to be effective in helping them.

by David Mole

Toronto

TV series on the air

"Gay News and Views," the new thirteen-week GAY-TV television series, began broadcasting in most areas of the Toronto area on Tuesday, September 20th. The series is being shown on the community cable channels (Channel 10 on converters) of at least three major cablevision systems: Rogers, Metro, and Maclean-Hunter, on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. Maclean-Hunter also aired the show on the previous Monday night at 10:30.

The show consists of a seven-minute news segment, interviews and discussions with people from different parts of the gay community, entertainment by gay artists, and a community calendar. The show is being produced by the GAY-TV collective. All personnel both behind and before the cameras will be gay.

The news will attempt to background major on-going news stories as well as to cover the events of the previous week. With the help of *The Body Politic's* news-gathering services, it will be international in scope. Some of the interviews will expand on news topics, while others will deal with life in the gay community in Toronto, including discussions of religion, gay health care, gay parents, and ways of coming out. GAY-TV also hopes to be able to interview any important lesbian or gay male personalities visiting Toronto over the next three months. The community calendar will be the most up-to-date listing of events possible, and will be prepared with the co-operation of 523 GAYs, the community calendar telephone line.

Further information about the series is available from Gord Montador at 364-6731.

Spain

Community group launched in Barcelona

A large-scale gay organization has been founded by a group of professionals in Barcelona. The society, to be named Lambda Institute, will provide community services to gays in Spain's second largest city.

The formation of this group comes at a time when Spain is moving toward democratic institutions and is relaxing its discrimination against Spanish gays. The other gay organization in the country is the Catalan Gay Liberal Front.

The Lambda Institute hopes to hold conferences and seminars, open a medical clinic to include testing for VD, provide individual and group counselling and legal assistance, institute a publishing program for public education, and establish a community centre. The organization will be financed by monthly dues and a fund-raising campaign.

The address of Lambda Institute is Avenida de Corcos, 9042, Barcelona, Spain.

Hamilton

Spectator features gay community

In late July, *The Hamilton Spectator* ran its first major article on the gay community in that city. The feature carried interviews with prominent homosexuals in the community as well as comments from church leaders in the area.

Brian Marsh and Shane Que Hee of the McMaster Homophile Association were among the gays who commented on aspects of the gay lifestyle. The politics of gay liberation and little coverage apart from mention of the Damien case and the Ontario Human Rights Commission recommendations.

Body Politic/7

Saskatoon

Saskatoon: the lesbian workshops

The five lesbian workshops at the National Conference drew a large number of women. The discussions were productive and the resolutions introduced a new lesbian strength into the National Gay Rights Coalition.

"Women musicians, artists and activists on the prairies need to develop a communication network" — so argued Sandy and Beth, the Regina lesbians who led the *Lesbian Culture Workshop*. The group decided to reserve several pages in the new publication *Prairie Women*. Those interested in women's culture should write to *Prairie Women* at 438 8th Street, Saskatoon.

In the *Lesbian Autonomy Workshop* some serious arguments on the nature of lesbian autonomy took place.

"Gaining power as lesbians is neither necessary or useful," went one view. "Together with men, we can fight for gay rights which will liberate us all."

The other main view came from women who felt that lesbian autonomy is a recognition of the relative powerlessness of lesbians in society. "Only to the degree that we develop our own power will we be able to set the terms of the support the men give us."

A discussion followed about the relation of lesbians to the NGRC, a predominantly gay male organization. Some women felt that NGRC should be largely ignored, except for conferences like this one that give us a chance as women to get together with one another. NGRC, they said, does little or nothing for lesbians, but instead uses women as workers on projects which do not directly address our needs.

The NGRC women, those who were delegates or belonged to groups affiliated with NGRC, argued that we ought to "get in there and work" to get women's power within the NGRC.



Fernon (left), and Janice and Beth of "Motherwill" perform at the lesbian coffeehouse

The workshop finally decided that since NGRC does speak nationally for gay rights, giving the impression that it speaks for lesbians, since in many towns the only place lesbians can contact each other is in mixed gay groups, and since NGRC has many resources we could use, it would not be a bad idea for lesbians to have a good chunk of power within NGRC. From that discussion came the "at least 50% power" resolution which was passed by a large majority at the final plenary of the conference.

Many women were curious about *Wages Due Lesbians* after seeing the film "All Work and No Pay." The film ended with shots of the Iceland Women's General Strike in 1975 that nearly shut down the whole country.

In the *Wages Due Lesbians Workshop*, Francie Wyland talked about why so many lesbians are in the campaign. "There are millions of lesbian women who cannot come out," she said, "because we stand to lose what little money we have — access to a husband's wage or our own low-paid second jobs."

The workshop ended by proposing to bring the response to Anita Bryant written by the Los Angeles Lesbians of the

Wages Due campaign to the plenary session for conference endorsement.

Participants in the *Sexuality Workshop* agreed that it was a great success, even if the women who co-ordinated it were rather nervous when they began. They passed out packages of poems, graphics, articles, and a long list of topics and questions to stimulate discussion.

We discussed approaching other women, how inadequate, shy, stumbling, and generally insecure we all feel sometimes, and the importance of being honest about our feelings with ourselves and with other women.

People told funny stories, spoke of embarrassing incidents and of painful moments. We alternately laughed, commiserated and sympathized.

We read Kate Middleton's "The Coldwater Dyke," which stimulated a discussion about masturbation and orgasms, or a lack thereof. A doctor from Saskatoon explained the physiological process of orgasms and gave some helpful suggestions on masturbation.

Many of us contributed our own "discovery of orgasm" stories and accounts of our pre-organic sexual feelings.

An important benefit of this exchange was that we all began to realize the wide range of sexual activity that women participate in. Many of us were relieved to find that more real-life lesbians do not fit the stereotype of a supersexual "Hot water Dyke."

The *Lesbian Custody Workshop* co-ordinated by Mallory, a lesbian mother from Regina, explored what it means to be a lesbian mother, relating the pain of giving up our children to ex-husbands or the courts.

Several women exchanged experiences and advice on telling their children that their mothers are lesbians and on preparing children to deal with questions from their classmates and teachers.

Many women are losing custody of their children because custody is so often decided on the basis of who can best provide financially for the children. This is usually the man.

A lesbian mother is open about her sexuality, or worse yet, belongs to a lesbian organization, she is considered to be "crusading for homosexuality." "I used to worry about that," said Mallory, "until I realized that every institution in society is crusading for heterosexuality."

We decided to bring a resolution to the plenary that came out of the 1976 Toronto conference, "Towards a Strategy for the Lesbian Movement" that read, in part, "No lesbian or any other woman should face the blackmail of losing her children in court, through social pressure or through poverty."

Generally these workshops raised a lot of issues and generated some good discussions among the women. We had an impact on the conference: visible evidence of that impact was the contingent of 65 women who led the more than 200 homosexuals in a gay march through the streets of Saskatoon.

by M. MacDonald
Winnipeg Lesbian Society

HEADLINES

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United States

NGTF Women organize

Women on the Board of Directors and staff of the National Gay Task Force have announced the formation of the Women's Caucus of the NGTF as a formally constituted body of lesbians and lesbian-feminists. The purpose of the Women's Caucus is to actively foster lesbian visibility within the gay movement and especially in the Task Force, and to ensure a lesbian presence in all women's issues projects and organizations around the country.

Some current involvements of the caucus include participation in the national Women's Agenda Coalition, work in the National Organization for Women (NOW) and a co-ordination effort for full lesbian participation in International Women's Year (IYW) State meetings as well as at the national convention.

from Gay Community News

Lesbian mother's lover gets child custody

In an encouraging victory in a Denver court, the lover of a lesbian mother, who died recently, has been given custody of the dead woman's daughter. Judge Orrell Weeks gave Donna Levy custody of the seven-year old child of her former lover Jeanette Matzopoulos.

The two women had been lovers for thirteen years and together raised the child for the first six years of her life. Though the relationship ended in 1974, Levy continued to visit the child regularly, maintaining a strong relationship with her. When the mother committed suicide last year, she left a note stating that Levy should have custody of her child Betty. Though Betty was temporarily awarded to Matzopoulos' sister and brother-in-law, custody was ultimately awarded to Levy.

At the trial, Judge Weeks emphasized that Levy's lesbianism should have nothing to do with the issue. She stated, "Donna's sexual preference has not affected the child in the past and is not related to her ability to parent the child."

from Gay Community News

Open season on gay teachers: Briggs

California gays are bracing themselves for a "Gade County-like assault on gay teachers" in that state. Right-wing anti-gay State Senator John V. Briggs has initiated a proposal that would permit school boards to dismiss or deny employment to "open and notorious homosexuals." Three hundred thousand signatures are needed to get the proposal on a ballot next June.

In soliciting support for his move, Briggs is citing a recent Gallup Poll which indicated that a majority of adults opposed homosexual teachers in the schools. Briggs, who has announced his candidacy for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, has borrowed Anita Bryant's name "Save Our Children" for this campaign.

Briggs has defined "open and notorious homosexuals" as those teachers who announce their sexual preference in class, "wear a dress," are seen "walking hand-in-hand" or who frequent gay bars.

from Gay Community News

Regina

Regina social spot celebrates its fifth

The Odyssey Club, which is run collectively by members of this city's gay community to provide an alternative social spot for gays, celebrated its fifth anniversary on September 15.

"In a sense it was a double celebration," said Terry Nelson, the club's public relations director. "Not only is it our birthday but most of the October

major renovations have been completed. I can announce to all gay people in Canada that Regina's organization is on the upswing."

Nelson put out a special appeal to gay organizations across the country to correspond with the Odyssey. "Especially women's organizations," he said. "They could help us make changes to our club so that we would have greater appeal to gay women. We're not just for men but also for women."

Nelson also asks: "Any group interested in exchanging information on phone counselling, please contact us. We'd like to know how other counselling groups work and would be more than willing to exchange information on training volunteers and on dealing with the various kinds of calls which come in."

The Odyssey currently operates a counselling line two nights a week and hopes to expand this to three nights in the near future.

The club is located at 2242 Smith Street, Regina.

Ontario

Law Union presses for gay rights

A group of progressive lawyers has called upon the Law Society of Upper Canada, the governing body of the legal profession in Ontario, to rule clearly against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in its code of professional conduct, and to eliminate all sexist language from its documents and publications.

Affairs of the legal profession are conducted by the Law Society, an elected group that represents mainly corporate and conservative interests in the province. The annual general meeting of the society, to be held in Toronto on October 20, is seen as the only occasion on which it is possible to challenge this right-wing control.

The Law Union of Ontario is a group of lawyers, law students and legal workers with an anti-capitalist perspective who are working toward fundamental social change as well as changes in law and in the administration of justice. Union members Marilynne Glick, Brian Iler and Paul Trollope drafted the motions to be debated.

The Law Union will also be furthering its awareness of gay issues by discussing the politics of gay liberation at a workshop at its fall conference. The conference, slated for October 28-30 at Hart House at the University of Toronto, will feature a panel of speakers from Quebec as the focus of a discussion of self-determination and other issues facing the Quebecois.

A number of Toronto lesbian and gay activists will be resource persons at the gay liberation workshop.

by Paul Trollope

New Zealand

Arson attempt mars Gay Pride Week

New Zealand's first National Gay Pride Week (July 24-30) began with a nasty reminder of the extent of anti-homosexual bigotry. About fifty gays were attending a social at Wellington's Edwardian Lounge when two sets of curtains in the building were deliberately set ablaze. Fortunately, both were quickly extinguished. A fire of this kind has been rare in New Zealand, a fact which made the fires all the more shocking to those who escaped. As Peter Janssen, Wellington Regional Representative of the National Gay Rights Coalition (NGRC), said in a statement to the press: "We've had functions gate-crashed by queer-baters before, but the alarming thing about last night was that no one has ever gone to the extent of trying to burn us out

before. This sort of thing has happened in the United States and Britain but never here."

By contrast, Gay Pride Week itself was largely successful in its aims of publicizing the gay liberation movement — publicity intended as preliminary to next year's General Election campaign. In order to have the maximum impact on the public, activities were co-ordinated nationally by the NGRC, which now has 17 member groups.

In early July, many newspapers ran articles on the NGRC. These were based on a press package that announced the formation of the Coalition, described its aims and membership, and gave profiles of its National Officers. A week later, the NGRC took out half-page advertisements in the major metropolitan dailies, publicizing statements of support by prominent people, and asking people to put pressure on their members of parliament to support gay rights.

In Gay Pride Week itself, the events given most media coverage were wreath-layings at War Memorials in the three largest cities, Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. The wreaths were in the form of pink triangles and commemorated gays murdered by the Nazis, and other victims of anti-homosexual persecution.

Later in these same cities, as well as Napier and Palmerston North, public meetings were held to discuss the position of gays under the law. Speakers included clergy, members of parliament and academics as well as gay activists.

Other activities throughout the week included dances, readings from gay literature and exhibitions of gay art.

by Lindsay Taylor

Rights Bill ignores gays

A sexual orientation clause has not been included in the Human Rights Commission Bill presently before the New Zealand Parliament. The Select Committee studying the bill reported to the House that it had considered 72

written and 55 oral submissions. The NZ Council for Civil Liberties, the Society of Women Workers' Association and feminist groups were among those in favour of it. Even some conservative organizations like the NZ Nomenclators Union endorsed the clause.

The Committee gave no specific reason for its rejection of a sexual orientation clause. Its chairperson commented, however, that sexual orientation, like age and political belief, would make an already lengthy list of groups covered by the bill even longer.

The Bill has still to be given its second reading in the House, and there is a possibility that a sexual orientation clause will be introduced for debate. Members of the Victoria University of Wellington Gay Liberation group have spent the last couple of months talking to Members of Parliament about the Bill. To date they have seen over 40 of the 67 MPs, several of whom have expressed interest in moving an amendment that would extend protection to gays.

by Lindsay Taylor

An appeal for help

Lesbian and Gay Male History Sources

Jonathan Katz, author of *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the USA*, is now working on Volume II to be published by ILH Press.

He would appreciate assistance in the discovery of sources documenting various aspects of American homosexual life (including related acts, institutions and attitudes) from colonial times to the present.

Among the priorities: a documents concerning three areas of Lesbian and Gay life: oppression, resistance, and the varieties of sexual love; b) hard-to-find sources referring to Lesbians; c) personal experiences and written records of ordinary (non-famous) Lesbians and Gays.

Write to Jonathan Katz, c/o Rames and Rames, 475 5th Ave, New York, NY 10017 USA.

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Days of Protest for John Damien

Friday, October 21
Saturday, October 22

On February 7, 1975, John Damien was fired from his job as a racing steward with the Ontario Racing Commission.

Charles McNaughton, then Chairman of the ORC, said "What did you expect? He was a faggot." He added, "Mr Damien performed his duties well in the past. It's not because he wasn't a good judge."

Sidney Handelman, then Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations responsible for the ORC, said "Damien has been and would probably continue to be a good and competent steward."

John Damien had been in the racing business for twenty years.

He decided to fight.

He sued the ORC for wrongful dismissal, and its directors and other individuals for conspiracy to injure him at his trade. The pre-trial hearings for that suit have been going on for over two years.

The opposition is funded by the Ontario government — the taxpayers of Ontario, the gay men and women who live in Ontario.



When John Damien was fired, he went to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. They sent him away because there are no human rights for homosexual men and women in Ontario. Or in British Columbia. Or Alberta. Or Saskatchewan. Or Manitoba. Quebec. New Brunswick. Nova Scotia. Newfoundland or Prince Edward Island. Not anywhere in Canada.

For six years Canadian gay people have been demanding that the federal and provincial governments provide protection for people like John Damien. Most of the politicians have said, "The public isn't ready."

But organizations like the United Church, the Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian Bar Association don't agree.

They support gay rights.



John did more than go to court. He turned to the gay rights movement to make his case a public issue.

That is why, on October 21 and 22, in cities across Canada the people of the National Gay Rights Coalition will be demanding:

Reinstate John Damien!

On June 21, 1977, the Ontario Human Rights Commission recommended that the Ontario government amend the Human Rights Code to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.

But gay men and women have even wider support.

Late in June, 1977 — a few days after Parliament passed the Canadian Human Rights Act, without protection for gay people, and a few days before the Canadian Armed Forces dismissed Barbara Thornborrow and Gloria Cameron because they were lesbians — a Gallup poll was published showing that 52% of all Canadians support (and only 30% oppose) protection for gay people in human rights legislation.

If this protection existed, what happened to Barbara Thornborrow, to Gloria Cameron, and to John Damien would be illegal.

On October 21 and 22 we will be saying:

Protect lesbians and gay men in all human rights legislation!

The National Gay Rights Coalition brings together lesbian and gay organizations from St. John's to Vancouver to end anti-gay laws and discriminatory practices and win full civil and human rights.



Member organizations

After Stewards, Winnipeg
Association pour les Droits des Gaietés du Québec
Atlantic Provinces Political Lesbians for Equality
Atrapos Fellowship Society/Odyssey Club, Regina
The Body Politic, Toronto
Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario
Comité d'Information Homophile de Québec/Centre
Humanitaire d'Aide et de Libération, Québec City
Community Homophile Association of Newfoundland,
St. John's
Community Homophile Association of Toronto
Oignity/Montreal
Oignity/Winnipeg
Gay Academic Union, Saskatoon
Gay Academic Union, Toronto
Gay Alliance at York, Toronto
Gay Alliance for Equality, Halifax
Gay Alliance Toward Equality, Edmonton
Gay Alliance Toward Equality, Toronto
Gay Alliance Toward Equality, Vancouver
Gay Community Centre, Saskatoon
Gay Equality Mississauga
Gay Info, Montreal
Gay Information and Resources, Calgary
Gay Media Group, Toronto
Gay Social Services Project/Gayline, Montreal
Gay Youth Group, Toronto
Gays for Equality, Winnipeg
Gays of Ottawa/Gais de l'Ottawa
Guelph Gay Equality
Homophile Association of London Ontario
Lesbian Caucus of the Gay Alliance Toward Equality,
Toronto
Lesbian Caucus of Saskatchewan Women's Liberation
Lesbians of Ottawa Now
Lesbian Organization of Toronto
McMaster Homophile Association, Hamilton
Metropolitan Community Church, Ottawa
Metropolitan Community Church, Toronto
Montreal Community Church
Queen's Homophile Association, Kingston
Revolutionary Marxist Group Gays, Toronto
Society for Education, Action, Research and
Counselling in Homosexuality, Vancouver
Trent Homophile Association, Peterborough
Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus, Markham, Ontario
Waterloo Universities' Gay Liberation Movement,
Kitchener/Waterloo
Windsor Gay Unity

Gay Rights Now!

Defaming Damien

Continued from page 1

somewhere along the way Hofessa (with the concurrence of Phillips?) of the laws I don't know... certainly, if they opposed this, their opposition was ineffective) was presenting his projects as the work of the "Special Projects Division" of the Committee, then of the "Special Projects Committee," and by the time it appeared it seemed to come directly from the Committee to Defend John Damien itself.

This ad appeared in several places such as *This Magazine* and *Content*, before anyone (so far as I know) on the Committee saw it. A brief look at its presentation of the case will make clear the gay politics of Hofessa, and of the chairpersons who long supported Hofessa's independence from the Committee.

"John Damien's Fight for Human Rights" is the heading on the ad, and the text appeals for support largely in terms of human rights. "Only you can help and in so doing, prove that this 'sexed' man is indeed part of the human community and Canadian society." The word "homosexual" appears once in the body of the ad, the word "gay" once. But the exact words are less important than the attitude toward the organized gay movement that the ad suggests. There is no mention whatsoever of gay people working together across this country not only to get John Damien rehired... and doing most of the work... but also to change anti-gay laws. Readers are invited to support gay people who are working for themselves, but rather: "You are invited to join These Prominent Canadians Who Support..." The Prominent Canadians pictured include such media and personalities as Claude Jutra, Doris Anderson, and Gene Galbreath. No gays are pictured... except for the picture of John himself, Jane Rule and Marie Claire Blais are at least named in a list of the unpictured Prominent Canadians. Each of this ad has no reason to think that gay people are supporting John, much less that they're his main support. A reader will be able to go on thinking what the government and straight media want us to think: that it's one person not a whole minority against the government.

But the most revealing part of the ad is the large print under the main body which says, "Help give back to John Damien what no one had a right to take away from the first place: his job, and his self-respect." Well, John certainly has his job, but I've never seen any evidence that he lost his "self-respect" as a worker, or as a gay person because of the firing. The implication here is clear: that gays have to appeal to straight, preferably prominent straights, in order to have self-respect. As I understand gay liberation, we accept our own "self-respect" as our starting point. We are trying to move away from just this notion that respect needs to come from people other than ourselves. The idea is not only to John Damien but to the rest of us as well.

What would have led Hofessa to phrase this way? His recent article in *Content* (August 1977), in which he comes out in print for the first time (and for which he needs our applause, I think), was some clue. He writes there: "...sexually I accept a narrow and stonewalled bed. Early in life I learned how painfully negative this anti-gay society can be, particularly when gay experiences are concerned."

I had a choice between two kinds of pain — self-denial, or social ostracism which was worse. He disdains the rest of us, then, who choose self-affirmation even when it leads to social ostracism, and the character disdains those of us who once referred to as "gay liberals" on television with their placards and pickets, their raucous voices shouting simple-minded slogans. In *Content* he writes, "Gay liberation offers me no escape. The gay community, as now constituted, is a tragically limiting place to be."

This, then, is the author of a series of articles that have put the Damien case before several thousand eyes. One can see all too clearly why Phillips

did not allow this "Special Projects Committee" to be questioned by the members of the Committee itself — a bit of housecleaning would have been required.

There were many other problems with this ad, and with Hofessa's plans for his *Decisive Event* in Canadian Social History. But legal and financial problems seem to be the ones that finally led to Hofessa being asked recently to resign in his *Special Projects*. And while John Damien and his lawyers continue to sort out the aftermath, Hofessa is an even more lonely, embittered man than he was when he stepped into the effort.

I have written to Hofessa that I regret his embitterment and do. But it seems to me not a function of the gay movement, as he claims. Rather, it results from his refusal to work collectively with us, from his terrible disdain of gay people. And it is to no one's credit that he was allowed to continue in his project for as long as he was.

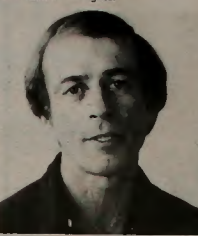
The *Special Projects Division* is not the only — perhaps not even the worst — example of organizational disarray and questionable gay politics in the defence efforts. There is also the matter of the John Damien Foundation.

From almost the first time he went to the lawyers, Hofessa indicated that he wanted to set up a charitable foundation. He saw this as a way of indicating his commitment to the gay community on his journey back after the case ends, when he will be free to put a portion of his settlement into the Foundation for ongoing work.

The lawyers and, it seems, Phillips, were the only parties to structuring this Foundation besides John. It has recently been granted both a Charter (in a superb twist of bureaucratic irony, by the very ministry that fired John) and charitable status (by the federal government) — which means that contributions to it are tax-deductible. The government was told that the Foundation would carry on the fight for gay rights after the case is over. But not a single word of this commitment was allowed to have input into the formation of the Foundation — or even to know what specific structure it was being given.

Indeed, the first time that Committee members got any detailed information about the Foundation was when they read the Hofessa ad — wherever they happened to read it. There, they learned that it would be "an organization that

I was glad, myself, to learn this, and wish that it had been made clear all along. The Foundation, however, will be run by a Board of Directors none of whom has to have any organizational commitment to gay liberation or the gay movement. Before the movement makes up its mind about the Foundation, it will be essential for the Directors to spell out in detail their priorities and a specific commitment to gay — not "human" — rights.



In a recent meeting of the Committee, Phillips read a number of "notes" which described the future relationship between the Committee and the Foundation. In the absence of a self-defining constitution, someone else is defining what the Committee will be: a fundraising unit for the Foundation, turning over all money directly to the Foundation and in turn receiving a budget from the Foundation. You see where the power will lie.

One final matter will provide an example of what has gone away and a way of indicating how it could be avoided in the future. It was the decision to drop the suit against the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The situation needs explaining.

Damien's basic "case" is a series of civil suits against those who fired him. He is suing for reinstatement to his job (one of the goals of the Committee) and for damages. A parallel case, which ought to force the Human Rights Commission to hear his case on the grounds that the term "sex" in the Ontario Human Rights Code covers homosexuals, also sought reinstatement.

On June 29, 1976, without any notice to the Committee to Defend John Damien — which is, after all, raising money to pay legal bills — the OHRC suit was dropped. Damien and the lawyer involved made the decision, implemented it, and sent out a press release about it within a few hours. They tried to telephone Chris Bearchell, then Chairperson of the Committee, to inform her of what they had done, but they were unable to reach her for several days. By then, members of the Committee had learned about the action elsewhere.

The reason for abandoning this suit was later explained convincingly. In this instance, members fully accepted the explanation (see TPB 26). But the Committee needs a regular structure in which matters like this can be discussed on a regular basis, so that when the time comes for quick decisions, everyone involved has had a chance to understand what's at stake.

One of John's lawyers, along with many of the rest of us, is now actively lobbying for the inclusion, by legislative amendment, of "sexual orientation" in the Human Rights Code. Whenever it gets included, John Damien will be on the OHRC's doorstep the next day with his case. That could certainly result in reinstatement.

A case like this — as this example shows — is a very intricate mix of legality and politics. Gays involved in it are learning or trying to learn, a lot that will be useful in similar cases in the future. It is, then, especially unfortunate when legal mystifications occur, or when information is not properly transmitted, or when decisions are made without a structured Committee debate on the issues involved.

It is no wonder that a recent meeting of the Steering Committee of the

Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario questioned what the gay movement should do regarding the present Committee and the Foundation (see News, page 4).

CGRO appointed a working committee "to examine the history of John Damien's defence, to work with the Committee to Defend John Damien to set up a constitution and a formal structure for the Committee to Defend John Damien, and to clarify the relationship between CGRO and the Committee to Defend John Damien and the John Damien Foundation."

The wording is unweildy, but the mandate is clear. That committee is to make its report in December, and what it says or has done may be useful to gay people and movement groups who wish to continue supporting the case actively, but who hesitate to channel money into a structureless Committee or into a non-gay Foundation.



In the meantime, the NGRC conference last July set up an ongoing defence committee to deal with future cases of this sort. The intention is to avoid the problems that have arisen in having a defence effort that is suspicious of too close a link with the organized gay movement. The NGRC Coordinating Office was praised for its handling of the Barbara Thornborough case last spring; the hope is that when another case on the order of John Damien's comes along, the NGRC will be in the forefront of organizing the defence.

So we're already learning, and the next few months will probably see the Committee constitutionalize itself in a way that will merit continuing support from the gay movement and from individuals, lesbians and gay men.

John Damien was removed from the track by a provincial government that thought a fired homosexual was a silent homosexual. His defence has come precariously close to making that victorious gay case seem minimalistic. Gays, one hopes that the NGRC Days of Protest for John Damien will counter this minimization. And that a clear new structure will get the Committee back into the right face. □

TSB has submitted this article, as we regularly do, to Damien's counsel to make sure that there are no inaccuracies in reporting the legal parts of the case. The article has been cleared.

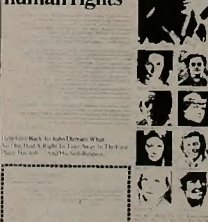
But counsel feels that, politically, any public discussion of the problems raised in the Defence Committee will encourage the Racing Commission's counsel, whom, it is said, read this paper looking for signs of weakness.

We are happy too have the Racing Commission lawyers as readers, but if they think that public discussion of the views of gay liberation in the defence Committee is going to weaken the case, they will be disappointed. This newspaper, and so far as we know, all people who have worked on the defence, are solidly behind John Damien.

And we urge all the rest of our readers, yet once more, to show our national strength by joining the Days of Protest and by continuing to send contributions to the Committee to Defend John Damien, Box 111, Station V, Toronto, Ontario M6R 3A4.

The Collective

John Damien's fight for human rights



It is not that the rest of us, then, who choose self-affirmation even when it leads to social ostracism, and the character disdains those of us who once referred to as "gay liberals" on television with their placards and pickets, their raucous voices shouting simple-minded slogans. In *Content* he writes, "Gay liberation offers me no escape. The gay community, as now constituted, is a tragically limiting place to be."

This, then, is the author of a series of articles that have put the Damien case before several thousand eyes. One can see all too clearly why Phillips

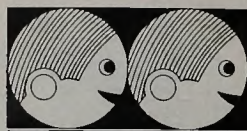
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We are inextinguishable, inexhaustible, incurable, inimitable, inexcusable and ineliminable.

If families can see us only as we were in baby pictures, docile, dependent, infinitely malleable to their muddled wills and failed dreams, ultimately disposable "for your own good," for what the neighbours will say, then they are not our families. (I say nothing about the individuals who are defined as a family; if they have particular qualities they are the qualities of persons, not of members of a family; if they are worth knowing, it is as persons, or friends, not as relatives.) If the support of a family is contingent on our silence or pretence, elaborate contortions, is it worth the cost? Is it humanly possible to be two people at the same time, one for the family and one for the rest of the world, without eventually disintegrating? What's the reward for the strain? A place in the family plot?

If the family is, as we're taught, the one really safe fold for the lost sheep, why have so many of the most aggressive Gay liberationists been unable to confront their families, or to press beyond the barricade? "Now you've told us, all is forgiven, let's talk about something else." Would these fighters tolerate that for a minute in

friday?

Outside a nursery school two boys, five or six years old, suddenly embrace. They threw their arms around each other and hugged, fiercely. The mother of one of them rushed at them, separated them, shook them and scolded them. Better they should fight...

Many Gay people move to the city, or to another city, to get away from their families. I did. But most make periodic pilgrimages "home," write or phone (Long Distance It Keeps People Together). Most say: "Of course it's going to be awful, but..." and can predict verbatim what will be said by each antagonist and what will not be said by anyone, then they go, just to prove it.

A Gay man describes his farm family, with whom he lives. Everyone does the work, so everyone shares the rewards. It isn't his parents' house, their money and so on, it's *ours*. The farm is *ours*, have and will always have a share, as long as it's there. "He's come out to friends, employers, co-workers, an ex-girlfriend." He's married in the streets and been on television yelling for Gay rights. He hasn't come out to his family.

Coming out to family is almost always me vs. them. "Me" is me alone, while "them" is not only the relatives but the whole damn Family, the Institution, the Basic Unit of Civilization, the whole weight of Heterosexual righteousness, the Bible, God, Nature, The Universe. So why don't we take some allies with us when we come out to our families, to even the balance a little? Why not us vs. them? Take a friend along, or two — ones who are on your side, of course. The protest that this is a "private matter" serves only to isolate and disarm us. Take a dozen friends, make a party of it. Unfair? Did they ever miss a chance to gang up on you? Charter a bus, do a tour of everyone's families. But tell them you'll all be back every six months or so to check on their attitudes, reading materials, etc., because we've also been sold a very cunning line on Good Manners. Good Manners demands that after they've been good enough to listen to our coming-out scene (either call, we shut up about it forever. Have you tried to talk about Gay rights and been cut dead with "We don't talk about what we do in bed, why should you?"

Good Manners requires that we keep what concerns us most deeply to ourselves, not to disturb them, at whatever the cost. That we behave like proper ladies and gentlemen, i.e., like them, regardless of who we are or what we feel. Courtesy is care for another; Good Manners is tyranny.

FLAUNTING IT!

The Holy Family

We've been so busy surviving, then trying to convince each other we were decent, then trying to convince the world we're normal that we've just now getting around to making demands. Outrageous demands like reasonable laws, an honest press, sensible sex education, elected representatives who represent, that sort of thing (you can see why *The Wizard of Oz* was such a big hit with Gay people, men at least). We haven't got normal yet to making threats, that probably comes next. But demands we're making in all directions except one: The Holy Family. Why is it so sacred? Because it's the first power in our lives, the first employer, the first police, the first judge, the first god, and we can't shake off these images no matter how much evidence piles up to render them absurd? Or do we buy the line that our very existence is endangering the family, therefore we should have the common decency to do everything we can, self-destruction included, to keep it going? Help prop up a dying dinosaur and you can't complain when it falls over on you.

Those who profit most from families must fear their collapse, and with it the collapse of "Western Civilization." They usually blame us. But it's collapsing of its own weight and decay. Or it's in quicksand, the more it struggles the more it sinks. Shall we go down with it? Or shall we build other kinds of mutual support, other "basic units" of society? (If you replace the basic units do you replace the whole thing? Other communities, with other balances of dependence and interdependence?)

At dinner last night we were eleven Gay men. Three, the hosts, live in a house of five, two guests live in another house of five, three were from out-of-town. Some of us knew each other, had worked or played or conflicted with each other some met for the first time. All could be called politically Gay; for each, some form of doing public battle is inseparable from free sexual expression — two had been verbally abused the night before, walking arm-in-arm on the street. Conversation, most of it usual about living, loving and fighting Gay in heteroland, was wild. From very different backgrounds, eleven distinct personalities fairly teut from perpetual combat, each with highly developed critical senses, strong opinions on almost everything, a passion for breaking Gay quilt-lines wherever it occurs, or even better might be about to occur, wit ranging from sharp to dangerous and five bottles of wine or was it six — it could have been a nightmare. But I came away feeling warm, giddy (not drunk, you can tell the difference) and strong, ready for the 89,000th round.

It seems to me now we were careening along an extraordinarily precarious path between self-interest and collective-interest. The talk was critical, the criticism universal, pointed, mostly hilarious but affecting. You spoke if you wanted to. At moments I more you said the more likely you were to be criticized, but no one escaped, no one was ignored. Sometimes it was cleverer or more acid than necessary, but you could laugh at that, too. No sacred cows. You could poke at or sweep away what seemed least real, least valuable or least productive in a person, without avoiding harm to what was most authentic, most distinctive or most deeply vulnerable. So you could mock vanity, but not self-esteem, or doubt. It seemed to me like pulling aphids off a rose without spoiling the bloom, not easy. At certain moments it felt as if everyone were instinctively closing to protect someone, as if the bloom were threatened. Or was it to protect all of us, because we didn't close about his own person or image but somehow joined to protect the whole people represented there? So it seemed.

If families were like that they would be in no danger, and I'd still be in one.

by Michael Riondon

Ostrom on Castro Street

In which
the gay heart of
San Francisco
is laid bare
by the *BP* illustrator.

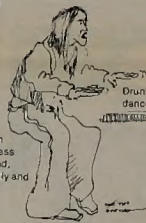
Hoi February day on Castro.
Apro waits by the Hibernia Bank.
Got the time?



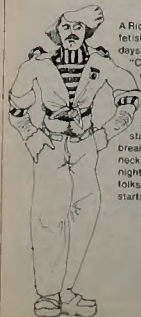
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Forever youthful, delight in
games, ageless. The quietest
child, his own indulgent dad,
being the boy again, finally and
forever.



Drunk faggot street
dancer singing about
garbage
cans.



A Ricky Ricardo
fetish... those magic
days and nights at the
"Copa Cabana"
endless rehearsal/s
with her
husband...
now Polk
Street's still a
stage and the chorus
breaks their collective
neck for opening
night — pet good seats
folks — the show
starts any minute.



Outrageous!

How can you argue with success?

by Michael Riordon



Cariety, which isn't soft-headed, reported from the Cannes Film Festival. *Outrageous!* is a remarkable debut pic by an original new talent, Richard Benner, writer who divides his time between New York and Toronto, an easy b.o. winner. B.o. is box office. Cue raved from New York. *Outrageous!* is the best ambassador the Canadian film industry has had in years. *The New York Daily News*: "funny, wise, compassionate film." Richard Benner has written a sharp-witted script and directed the film with a gentle loving touch, proving that he is a talent who bears watching in the future."

Rex Reed: "*Outrageous!* survives its material, its shoddy mechanics and even its crummy title, it's a marvellous, fresh, touching film with heart, lugging insight and compassion, and most definitely the season's major unheralded surprise." Judith Crist: "Craig Russell, in Robin's role, offers us, with restraint and understatement, so clear a view of the complexity of the homosexual as private and public person that the film becomes his by power of personality, let alone of professionalism."

The Toronto Sun, reporting New York reaction: "The rave review from Reed is reportedly the first of many to come... *Outrageous!*... may be the surprise hit of the summer movie season." It opens in Odeon theatres across Canada this fall and winter, following New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, opening September 30 at Toronto's York Cinema. An Odeon executive predicts that it will be "the most successful Canadian picture of all time" at the box office.

This is just the beginning. In *Outrageous!* the Canadian Film Development Corporation (the government body that partly financed the movie, Rex Reed called it a "tutty thing to do"), the private backers, the theatre owners, the distributors, the producers, the cast, the technicians and writer-triumphant hit on their hands.

An American gay newspaper says: "From the gay liberation point of view, the film is far ahead of almost anything that has come before." The critic gives it a "four star rating," conditional on Benner giving us "even more of his vision, now that he has furthered the image of gays as human beings on film."

What can you say? "Show me a happy homosexual and I'll show you a gay corpse." — Boys in the Band. Everyone knows the ugly record of the images that imprison us on screen, movie and television. If you believed them, and who didn't, we were suicidal or murderous, depraved, ridiculous, sick — or progress? — helpless, hopeless, pitiable but ever so funny. Richard Benner is "infuriated" by it all. "A lot of gay kids I know, the reason they live secretive, unhappy —

socially unhappy — lives is partly due to the media." What do we do about it? "Go and break people's arms who touch the subject of homosexuality wrong, as a source of ridicule and comedy. I'm violent, because I'm American. Burn the theatre, I don't know. Go what the Blacks did. It has to be something — economics. Boycott things like crazy. I don't know. Show the opposite. That helps, I suppose." It's a tough question.

A Web of Images

I see, hear, feel, need and think. By a composite of experience, memory, learning and testing I am and I become. I accumulate over a lifetime evidence for an image of myself and an image of the surrounding world. The way these two connect is the way I live.

Anyone who would control my life — parent, priest, educator, leader, advertiser, entertainer — must control my access to information. To reach beyond my own senses I must depend on theirs. They know that I read their newspapers, learn their jingles and see all around me their bright compelling images of what "everyone" sees and hears, what the "average person" wants and needs, what "the man in the street" believes and feels. Endlessly recurring, these external images work into regions of my mind where powers of discrimination and resistance are lowest. Most often they whisper not to my strength but to my weakness, to frustration, greed, isolation, guilt, fear — never to challenge these but to make them, to concentrate or dilute them, whichever at the moment is most profitable.

A French government official explained his rejection of Marcel Ophüls' *Le Chagrin et La Pitié* for the national television that had commissioned it: "Myths are important in the life of a people. Certain myths must not be destroyed."

Among the vehicles and processes with which myths are created, spread and maintained in ascendancy over personal experience and observation, the most powerful are visual images, particularly the film-video "experience." It works in the dark, the primal cave. Its images are larger than life, or at least more highly organized and distilled. It exists only in light. You can't even protest in the margins. In a Godard film a character physically attacks the movie screen. Godard dreams; there is always another screen, another print.

Pictures can speak and impress long before words can, then continue working below or in lieu of words. It isn't accidental that verbal fluency is deteriorating. It's immensely profitable. Sense-aymobs, the stuff of our visual images, are much more flexible, less concrete, less easily examined or questioned than word thoughts, with them one can slide across a deceptively complex metaphor in a flash. Loaded atmospheres can work away in the periphery of the frame, on the periphery of judgement. These images help construct the so-called "climate of ideas" without ever having to speak in ideas or to ideas. That is the source of their power, and of their danger to us.

The people making and selling these images depend on our smooth functioning in the machinery they run. In processing reality for us they must ensure that they are close enough to our "average" perceptions and concerns that we will be unlikely to reject them outright. "A child is far too self-centred to relate to any dilemma which does not, somehow, relate to him" — to his own evolving dilemma. The child escapes in to what he would like his situation to be." — James Baldwin. In the face of starving continents, "I'd love to buy the world a Coke." And the child becomes an adult, me.

The external image of me as a gay person, the image mass-produced and mass-marketed for popular consumption, follows the dictates and requirements of the image-makers. I pick it up fresh daily as everyone else does, one consumer reader-viewer among the masses who share in the "popular view." "If all of me — my experience, my own accumulation of real-life experience, my sensibility, my judgement — conflicts with those "universal truths," those "appropriate responses," what am I to do? Often against my own will I go under, they do it very well.

As long as we were invisible, any image of us would do; there was nothing or no one to contradict it (one's own experience and observation having been so cast into doubt). But rising gay visibility and organized gay resistance to many of the worst distortions force the image-makers to work harder. When and where they can, they push the old standards, where they must, they improvise, always on the old themes but playing with the tones, the decoration and the colours. The latest thing is compassion. It starts from the old sickness image, but it has a new improved look, an expansive, supportive tone. For people who are tired of fighting, or who are just learning to resist, it is an exceptionally beguiling line. It beckons: "Come in, do come in where it's warm, you've been out here in the cold so long, poor things. We have room for all kinds, truly there's good and bad in all of us, isn't there. We have only a very few house rules, you'll have no trouble at all adjusting." That's where the trouble starts.

Benner: "Before we started making the film, I used to worry a lot about what it would say to the world about homosexuals, but I decided to stop worrying about it because I know that what's in the film is accurate about those people the film talks about."

Rex Reed: "When Benner, who is young and experienced but full of feeling and knowledge about his subject, trains his camera on the faces of the handsome hot boys in the gay bars listening nostalgically to Bobby's Talulah Bankhead imitations, one gets the prickly sensation on the neck and spine John Ford produced with the Dust Bowl survivors in *The Grapes of Wrath*." A telling comparison, while the Ford

movie lives on as a "classic," does anyone know or care what became of the dustbowl survivors, the real ones? After two hours of gritty realism are finished, the lights come on and reality resumes, alas.

Look a little closer at who's calling *Outrageous!* honest, and why. Judith Crist: "The background bits of the ungay life become the fabric of the film." What does Judith Crist know about "gay life"? Of course she has her images — and "the fabric of the film," Benner: "The story is of these two people who are so fringe or so strange that they can't fit into any society — he can't fit into his own gay society, they can't fit anywhere except with each other." So how can viewers see it as a picture of "the gay life" or "the gay world," as *Variety* saw it? But isn't that exactly how stereotypes work, through ambiguous images?

The *Outrageous!* "faisley" now consists of a disco in Toronto, a bar in New York, looking for gays on Yonge street, doing Mae West. Barbra Streisand, etc., lots of make-up, leather and what looked like a brass dildo. And we have a lot of time on our hands.

spend most of it dancing or listening rapturously to female impersonators. That's about it. Can one argue that this is more than we've had before? More of what? There are two possibilities: either this adequately represents "the gay life" or it doesn't. If it doesn't, no one should come away from the movie thinking it does. Given the situation of gay people, unclear imagery can only harm us because it permits and will almost always elicit negative interpretations.

Women's Wear Daily: "Most of Craig Russell's part calls for him to deliver bitchy one-liners, which he does expertly, but he also has a strong scene showing his unhappiness when a man he's just made love to indicates he wants cash — it wasn't a question of love." Robin's post-sex scene is, as far as I could tell, his only sexual encounter in the film. Are we to take this will represent his life? C.O.D. or nothing? Anyway, who needs sex when you've got an audience to love you and a dippy friend to support? Benner changed the scene when the producers said it didn't really do what he intended, to show Robin at "the bottom of the sexual

totem pole." "The producers didn't interfere in any negative way. They only affected the gay statements in a clarification manner — they would ask for a scene to be changed because they really didn't understand." The result in this case, not surprisingly, is a scene that confirms one of the creepiest old images of homosexuality, a cold little exchange between a sad queen and a stud who only does it for money. That they understand, *Variety*: "The best film made up to now on drag shows, the gay world, and the trials and tribulations of the homosexual. But it's a human story." Thanks.

The *New York Times* called *Boys in the Band* the first movie to treat homosexuality as a fact of life. ("Show me a happy homosexual and I'll show you a gay corpse." Fact of life!) Critics said, years later, that *A Very Natural Thing* was the first movie to treat homosexuality as matter-of-factly. Now in 1977, *The New York Daily News* says of *Outrageous!*: "His homosexuality and her mental illness are important in the film only in the sense that they are both social outcasts with no one left to cling to but each other." So what's new? One

of the film's producers calls it "an off-beat musical," which is badly straining a definition. "The story of a young crazy lady and her fringe, a hair dresser who decides to be a star through female impressions." He manages to get rid of the homosexuality altogether, a starting point for gymnastics. Or is it just part of a new image for us? What's all this silly talk about being gay, we're all the same under the skin, aren't we. A goodly number of gay people are buying it. Are we fighting to be allowed to disappear?

Why worry about straight critics? Some people think that to achieve liberation we have to win over the heterosexuals to our cause. Does *Outrageous!* do it for us? Will one less of us get beaten up or murdered because of it? Will one less of us lose custody of a child, lose a home or a job because of it? These are the present realities of our world. Will one heterosexual, even one heterosexual parent, march with us because of it, fight on our side, vote us into power, grant us custody, let us teach their children what it is to be gay? Will one heterosexual be changed by it — not comforted but changed, challenged, moved to original thought?

The critics and producers quoted here are, with one exception, at least publicly heterosexual. The movie worked for them. It didn't threaten them, challenge them or enrage them. None of them need give it a second thought. To me, Liza had one of the most potentially threatening lines: "Why do all straight guys turn out to be such susholes?" — but she was gay, wasn't she?

As several critics put it, *Outrageous!* isn't. They meant it, of course, as a compliment. That's how it speaks to straights, from a satisfying, cathartic remove. What could be more pleasant than having your heartstrings tugged for a couple of hours by two funny-sad underdogs — they're charming crazies, utterly harmless. At third, Martin was dangerous, he stabbed someone and was whisked out of the movie! — who looks as if they're going to be alright without in any way ever crossing your path. If you're on the right path? It's the American dream. No wonder someone asked, will this be the gay people's *Rocky*? It should arouse only the warmest feelings from the audience! " — *New York Daily News*. The *Toronto Sun*, which is waging a systematic campaign to keep sexual orientation protection out of the Ontario Human Rights Code, to inflame public hostility and even violence against gay people, and to keep us firmly locked in the closet, is raving about *Outrageous!*, and it isn't even here yet! They want people to see it. So much for its function — outside of b.o. — in the straight world. The icons are safe.

That leaves us, gay people. Admittedly we're only a small portion of the b.o., but we'll be a larger portion for this movie, a "word-of-mouth film" according to an Odeon executive, than for most others. How does *Outrageous!* speak to us? What is there in its images for us? Will it make us stronger in any way? What does it contribute to our view of ourselves or of the world? Does it challenge any of the learned misconceptions that weigh us down? Most important, does it move us closer to a fresh non-heterosexual way of dealing with each other?

Images pour in on us not only from "the outsider" but also from among ourselves. The *Advocates and Mandates* of our world sell gay men images of ourselves that have nothing to do with who we are as gay men. How many people do you know who even look like Bill Buck Stud, the fold-out? How many do you know who are *trying* to look like him, be like him, be him, working themselves silly at it, competing with the men they should be loving? One forgets a man is a man, not an 8 x 10 glossy package of mustache, biceps, tan, denim and cock. We desperately need new images of ourselves: they will come only from our own hands and voices.

Continued on page 23



Craig Russell as Robin Turner (above) with Allan Moyle (Martin) and Hollis McLaren (Liza). Childhood friends Liza and Robin remain tied by the "frags" worlds in which the film finds them, his the female impersonator's club circuit, hers schizophrenia. Liza, pinning her hopes for sanity on her unborn child, stays in Toronto while Robin shoots for stardom in New York, but they keep in touch. In the end they're together, as before. Martin's madness is less easy to accommodate; he stabs someone and is "whisked out of the movie."

Writer-director Richard Benner (right) on location during filming. Like many filmmakers in Canada, he had to seek financial support from "the feds," \$165,000 low budget quickie! "In New York, The Canadian Film Development Corporation put up money as well; a 'gutsy thing to do,'" said Rex Reed.

Below left: Robin Turner phones home to Toronto after his successful New York debut. "The audiences gay and straight love him first time out, then he's a star." Craig Russell's real life, unfortunately, wasn't quite that simple.

David Mielwirth (below right), playing Robin's leather cab-driver agent, discusses his client's performance as Mae West. "Keys on the left, Active Dominant," he lights for the contracts. Robin merely sighs.



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 Erik, I felt as if I knew and thanked God
 that Canada is so far away."
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DYKES

Fall of a movement heroine

Jill Johnston comes to town

In June a movie starring Jill Johnston, filmed by Kay Armitage and Lydia Wazano, was shown at Innis College (Jill Johnston: October 1975).

Jill was present in person to answer questions after the movie. The first thing she did to shock her fans was to say that she was not going to sign the papers for the release of the movie outside of Canada, because she does not want to have the image of her past life as shown in the movie (that of a radical militant dyke feminist) associated with her anymore. She proceeded also to say that she thought all political anger was invalid. Her fans, like myself, duly stunned, asked her a few mild questions regarding our shock. Was this the fearless frumious feminist who had in years past kicked men out of places she spoke at on reading tours? Was this the movement heroine of *Lesbianation*?

That night at the Three of Cups, an all-women's coffee house where Jill was to read and discuss her work, I got a more extensive understanding of Jill's new position. It was more than a refusal to be drafted into a superstar position — it was a fundamental ideological and philosophical change of heart. I concluded that Jill Johnston had either been bought off, scared off, or was having a nervous breakdown.

She began by reading a short piece about a woman who was raped and how it was her own Personal Responsibility (we were to hear a lot of that phrase "Personal Responsibility" plus the words "karma" and "astral plane"). A woman from the Rape Crisis Centre began to disagree with her on this, pointing out the political harmfulness of disseminating propaganda portraying women as responsible for their own rapes. Then ensued a lengthy discussion of "Personal Responsibility," "karma" and "cause-and-effect." People of course asked the inevitable questions — what about Collective Responsibility, Political Causality, and Political Movements? If everything was just a matter of karma and personal responsibility, why did people sometimes get together in political movements to try to effect changes?

Well, yes, Jill admitted, from time to time certain political movements did occur, like earthquakes and eruptions of other natural forces, and from time to time she was utilized by the latest new political fads — the Anti-Nuclear Movement, for example. But by and large everything was still just a matter of personal responsibility. She was tired of people acting like children and blaming the world for all their problems. She herself remembered when she used to ascribe political causes to the breakup of a love-affair and always found a political reason for the rejection of her literary work.

Throughout the entire discussion I couldn't help but notice an aura of fear and paranoia about Jill, the constant re-direction of the discussion to the question of rape and the constant morbid preoccupation (ears *millenies*) with the question of rape, which I find very preoccupied and politically unconstructive. I came to the meeting a strong, self-confident woman and left almost afraid to go home by myself for fear I would be raped. Jill was constantly selling us on ways to become as invisible as possible, and all of a sudden it was about "But I don't want to be invisible."

Very well," said Jill, "that's your business — how to be invisible is other

people's business."

Someone changed the topic by suggesting we talk about Jill's work as a writer.

The major change Jill's writing has gone through, after *Lesbianation* and *Gullible's Travels* occurred when Jill's major opus, *The Book of Fathers*, had been refused by her publishing company. (This was at a time that her political views, as expressed in her writing, also changed.) *The Book of Fathers*, said Jill's publishers, was too unreadable, too many paragraphs of inaccessible Joycean word play and lower case unpunctuated sentences.

But, I protested mentally, this had been exactly the style of Jill's two big whoppers, *Lesbianation* and *Gullible's Travels*, and thousands of lesbians in Canada and the US had read these books and loved them. To make one's readers do some mental work and to speak to them in a unique and attention-

responsibility? Is it because of some failure within our women's movement which allows movement superstars to be created and then persecutes them for being stars and fails to give them the human understanding and support they need? Or is it a matter of a person, Jill Johnston, with a specific craft, writing, not being allowed an outlet for this craft and so changing her life in order to have it?

Personally, I see the problem as one of a very common prevalent ideology within the women's movement: an obsession with a very macho super-dyke image of what a liberated woman should be and a failure to provide a more co-operative female definition of strength and liberation. The macho super-dyke and super-technician of *Lesbianation*, who can do everything from fixing cars to climbing mountains, nevertheless complains that she is afraid of growing old and feels lonely at times. As she herself says in a section of *Gullible's Travels* where she "goes out to get a fresh of breath air" (I am transcribing her literally; spoonerisms are intentional), people have got their backs and their whites mixed up, with blacker whites and whiter blacks and butch and femme definitions abounding everywhere in an unreal photographer's negative of black and white all over the place.

Perhaps the timid vacillating woman we saw at the Three of Cups is the opposite side of the macho strapping superstar super-dyke of *Lesbianation*. Perhaps even superstars need the support of other women in order to keep on fighting. Or perhaps Jill Johnston is simply "cooling it out" or resting from a nervous breakdown, as some people have suggested. I only know, even years ago when I read *Lesbianation*, and more recently *Gullible's Travels*, I was upset by a kind of very macho male (image) I saw portrayed therein as a model for liberation. I was upset, also, by the push-down of other women, particularly in *Gullible's Travels*, a kind of fascist refusal to accept anyone different from herself (i.e. heterosexual or non-violent).

The fact that Jill Johnston came to the Three of Cups and made some of the most patently reactionary anti-

demanding idiom was not necessarily being obscure and inaccessible. Gertrude Stein, Jill's literary proscriber, had done something very similar.

"So do you think that perhaps the male-dominated publishing industry has been a problem for you?" I suggested. Well, she said, the male-dominated publishing industry was a problem for everybody. Really, writers should get together and form unions (thus effectively dodging the very political question of the position of feminist writers published by male editors and publishers).

What kind of writing was she doing now? I asked.

Oh, short pieces about going away to the country like "Crow" and "Wind" (and very semi-religious zen-type things), I gathered.

At this point a follower of Jill's, attracted by the quasi-mystical, semi-religious language Jill used, said something to the effect that we should all be responsible for our actions and learn to channel our anger positively. Jill (a very active crowd-controller) closed the discussion on this note and everybody clapped except me. I did not believe that Jill Johnston had talked about channeling our anger positively. I felt that she had talked about fear and non-action.

Why does the author of *Lesbianation* recant and deny all her previous writing? Why does a radical from the hip political movement of the 60s to a Ginsberg and a primary exponent of the gay feminist movement suddenly back down from a militant dyke stand and speak of "karma" and "personal

woman statements ever heard in that setting (and got away with it) without being skewered by the lesbian community? I was a tribute to her masterful use of the male world, and especially the esteem in which she has been held for her two books, *Lesbianation* and *Gullible's Travels*, and for the woman we remember from two years ago.

by Owen Hauser

October

Gay culture

Thoughts from the National Conference

The theme of this year's National Conference in Saskatoon was "Towards a Gay Community." It was only natural, therefore, that the conference, or some members of it, should consider the question of gays and their place in the country's culture. In honour of the conference, the Saskatoon Public Library prepared a display and bibliography of their rather impressive holdings of books about homosexuality. The University of Saskatchewan showed a selection of gay novels from Oscar Wilde to Patricia Nell Warren, and the Millard Gallery put on an exhibition entitled "Pictures for Gay People." At the conference itself, a workshop was devoted to "Gay Artists and Craftpersons," and another to "Lesbian Music."

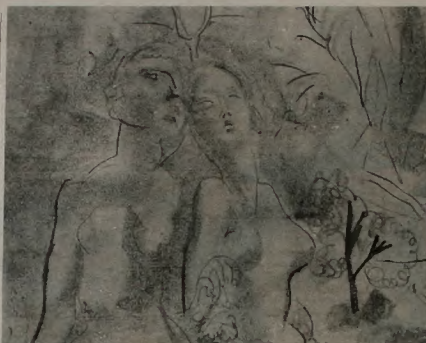
Altogether, there was a lively discussion about the role of the gay artist in a homophobic society. At the "Gay Artists" workshop the key issues soon emerged. The participants first had to decide whether in fact there was such a thing as gay culture. One or two argued that to talk in such terms simply muddled the issues — all an artist can do is deal with what interests him/her, and if that happens to be drag, or the naked body, so what? The subject is one of the least important elements in a work of art. The gay artist must be judged on the same grounds as any other artist, and all art is "good" or "bad" for the same reasons.

There was strong opposition to this. Some workshop participants insisted that there is such a thing as a gay sensibility and it is revealed not only in the choice of subject but also in the treatment of the subject. Gay artists differ from other artists in that they have something special to say about gay people, and indeed they have a duty to speak to gay people. They also have the task of explaining the gay experience to the world at large.

The workshop also revealed some of the problems faced by the gay artist (or "cultural worker"): to use the jargon initiated by one of the speakers). Publishers and galleries often refuse to exhibit gay works, claiming that they would not be tolerated by a hostile public. Perhaps the biggest difficulty lies in finding a sympathetic audience. Heterosexual critics, for instance, are unable to meet gay works on their own terms and they give reviews that are not so much hostile as uncomprehending. To make things worse, the gay artist receives almost no response from the gay viewer or reader, and enjoys almost no communication with other gay artists.

The isolation of the gay artist was a major theme of the discussion at the workshop, and this particular concern was reflected in the motion presented at the conference at its final plenary session. The motion asked that the Canadian Gay Archives be used as a reference centre, maintaining a stock of slides, and even art works, so that anyone interested could find, in one place, examples of what was being done by the various gay artists across the country. The motion also asked that at future national conferences, the organizers arrange space for exhibitions of the "cultural works" of gay people (such works were not limited to painting or sculpture, of course, but include poetry, crafts, music and so on). By assuming that gay artists could keep in touch with each other and they could enjoy the response of a gay audience.

As a beginning, the discussion at the conference is promising, although it seems to me that there are dangers in the proposals contained in the motion.



Drawing by Frances Hodgkins.

It would be a pity if gay artists banded together to form an inbred, mutual admiration society, protecting themselves from the larger world. It would also be a pity if closer contact with a gay audience resulted in pressure to deliver the approved "message" — propaganda. With these caveats in mind, however, the advantages are obvious: gay artists would be encouraged by their contact with their fellow artists and heartened by a closer relationship with their most natural audience; they would be stronger to produce the works that will give us a voice and that will illuminate the gay experience for the world generally, and, in a few cases, they will be stronger to produce those rare works that will be of universal significance.

The discussions that began in the workshop erupted again at the opening of the exhibition at the Millard Gallery. Since I organized the show, it would not be appropriate for me to review it, but I was struck by the fact that many of the questions discussed during the workshop had already arisen for me while I was putting together the show, and perhaps I can talk about that. When I first thought of a show to honour the national conference, I was not sure how to proceed. Ought I to ignore subject matter and put on a show of artists who were gay? Or should I limit the show to concentrate on works that were especially relevant to a gay audience because they dealt with certain issues in a certain way? In the first case, there was a problem. Who were the gay artists? I am reasonably well-informed about the Canadian art scene; I could easily give you a rundown on artists in a wide variety of categories such as "Western (topographical" or "Realist" or "Feminist." But I could not come up with a list entitled "Canadian Gay Artists" — Everson was the only one I knew. Gay artists must surely exist in considerable numbers, but they were not letting anyone know of it as far as I could see. But there were also difficulties surrounding the second kind of show — work relevant to a gay audience. Assuming that gay people are not exclusively interested in the naked body and the sex act, what themes were appropriate — social protest? relationships? One or two narrow sectarian subjects aside, gay

people are interested in the same things that all people are interested in. I finally decided. We are, in fact, quite normal. In the end, of course, the exhibition was a compromise, as the title suggests (and not only for the reasons given above but also because of limited resources). Everson was there, naturally. His images of high fantasy, so elegantly controlled, had to represent Canadian Gay Art. Keith Vaughan, the English artist, was also represented; he is a self-acknowledged homosexual, a lover of long standing and has written sensitively on his experiences. He explores the subject of the male nude powerfully and with a solid romanticism. There was also a Sir Francis Rose portrait of a youth put in as an oblique nod to Gertrude and Alice, and several erotic drawings by the Saskatoon artist, Warren Peterson — I chose Peterson (non-gay, incidentally) because his works raise interesting questions about sexual roles.

A special case were the pictures by Frances Hodgkins (she is to New Zealand what Emily Carr is to Canada). There is no documentary evidence to prove that Hodgkins was a lesbian, but in my reading about her I have often thought that she was. The people she was most at ease with, for example, were always single women, often in couples and fairly clearly gay. And she looked it herself, in the English lesbian uniform of thick tweeds, "sensible" shoes and a mannish hat. She could paint and draw like an angel. One pencil sketch I have has always intrigued me. It is a study of two female figures in a statue, an important sketch because she incorporated the figures into several major paintings. Could one guess the sex and sexual orientation of the artist simply by looking at this drawing? Although I am one of those who are suspicious of labels like "gay art," I cannot help feeling that this particular drawing has a sensibility that one might identify as lesbian. It is impossible to pin down exactly, but there is a certain slant of meaning that no man could produce, and which gives the drawing its special power. However, Frances Hodgkins' work generally makes it clear that she was an artist first and (assuming my diagnosis is correct at all) a lesbian second. The priorities are the same for Keith Vaughan. As far as I am concerned, that is how it should be.

by Peter Millard

Books

Gay Liberation in Canada

A Socialist Perspective

edited by Duncan McLean

Vanguard, 1977, \$1.25

Considering that *Gay Liberation in Canada: A Socialist Perspective* appeared on the eve of the much-touted "fusion" of the League for Socialist Action (whose views this pamphlet represents) and the Revolutionary Marxist Group to form the Revolutionary Workers' League, we can only speculate that its publication was designed either to bring RMLG gays and lesbians "into line," or to short-circuit any future "discussion" in the "new organization" — or both.

Gay Liberation in Canada is a collection of documents and reports from the LSA which attempts to give the impression that a "discussion" has occurred in its ranks.

But, a "socialist perspective" this pamphlet most assuredly is not.

The position of the LSA can be summarized from its voluminous four-page statement, "The Socialist Perspective for Gay Liberation," as follows: "The League welcomes the development of the gay liberation movement, and unconditionally supports its struggle for civil and human rights for gays." However, while rejecting with "completeness" all "reactionary theories" that maintain homosexuality to be an "illness" or "perversion," it hastens to add that "the LSA/LSO does not take any stand on the essential character or value of homosexuality."

Also laced on is the tried and true observation that socialism is necessary, "as the solution to gay oppression and all forms of oppression." But clearly the fate of homosexuals and our liberation seems like an afterthought in a conclusion general as this — a mere by-product of a process in which active participation of gays is insignificant if not unnecessary.

Unwilling to venture beyond the liberal confines of a purely civil rights approach, the pamphlet itself documents how the LSA refused to adopt the real socialist perspective gay liberationists in the LSA fought for in vain. Such a perspective must accept gay oppression, and the elimination of that homosexuality is a natural component of human sexuality, that the monogamous heterosexual nuclear family is the fundamental bulwark of gay oppression, and that the elimination of the imposition of exclusive heterosexual norms is one of the long term goals of homosexual liberation. Full gay liberation cannot be granted under capitalism — socialism is a prerequisite; Marxists must solidarize with the slogan Gay is Good.

Yet the League's Executive Secretary proclaimed that to adopt such an analysis "deprioritizes us. It means less able to grow into a mass party, and it tends to transform us into an esoteric cult." (") Conclusion? Gay liberation obviously "alienates" the working class.

The position of the LSA outlined in this pamphlet has nothing to say about the relationship between the struggle for the liberation of gay people and the struggle for socialism. The necessary Marxist and materialist analysis of homosexuality and the nature of gay oppression is missing, as is a socialist analysis of our struggle for emancipation. In this sense the LSA's "perspective" is no more than a rehash of the resolution adopted at the recent federal NDP convention!

The book furthermore fails to detect the extremely bizarre fashion in which this internal "discussion" developed (or, more correctly, failed to develop). The fact is that since 1971 every trick in the book was employed to confuse the "gay question":

1. The position of the LSA was engaged at each step of the way to keep it from going beyond the membership in an orderly way. The LSA leadership's refusal to August 1976 speaks of serious "errors" in the League's 1971 "non-Marxist" tentative assessment" being

SEBASTIANE

a film by Derek Jarman

LATIN with ENGLISH subtitles

music by Brian Eno



**the story
of a man
a martyr.
a vision
oppressed
by power
and sex.**

North American Premiere Coming Soon

SEBASTIANE

"corrected" by the 1973 convention. But how were they "corrected?" In life they were resolved for the leadership by the attack of gay and lesbian members. By 1973 most had been driven out of the organization, demoralized and fed up with the group's hopelessness. Support for gay rights "is rhetoric and its consistent refusal to adopt or even consider any scientific analysis of gay oppression and liberation."

The concluding "Balance Sheet of the Division" (read self-criticism) by two of its participants is extraordinarily unusual considering that the "vanguard party" does not generally publish the purely individual views of its members in this fashion.

It concludes with the sectarian call for gay men and lesbians to join the LSA — an organization which at worst has abstained from active participation in our movement, and at best intervened in a thoroughly opportunistic fashion as a sideline commentator trying to peddle its civil-liberation approach coated in "socialist" veneer.

The LSA position in this pamphlet contains no socialist analysis whatsoever. Furthermore, it does not explain the strategy, tactics, discussions, struggles and dynamics of the gay movement in Canada and Quebec, they do not present any perspective for gay activists. Six years after the inception of the contemporary gay liberation movement in this country the LSA had still "sort out" such fundamental issues as the "merit" of coming out, the "importance" of lesbian autonomy, and the correctness of the demand that all age of consent laws be abolished. There is absolutely no indication that the Revolutionary Workers' League will progress any faster than this abysmal snail's pace.

Gay Liberation in Canada signals the end of a "discussion" that never was.

by Stuart Russell

Gay Liberation in Canada: A Socialist Perspective is available from *Pathfinder Press Ltd.*, 25 Bulwer Street, Toronto, M5T 1A1.

The Naked Civil Servant

Quentin Crisp

1977 edition, Duckworth (Burns & MacEachern in Canada), \$9.95, Fontana paperback, \$2.25.

Quentin Crisp claims no special skill as a writer. This is strange — he is clearly not a modest man and his autobiography shows him to be a master of the art of manipulating the English language for the amusement of his audience. If anything, *The Naked Civil Servant* is too funny; there is the temptation not to review the book but simply to quote from it, to tell gems out and paste them together purely as an entertainment. But that's not all there is to it.

Crisp's candid account of his very particular life — his "impudent dash between the cradle and the lumb across open country and under fire" — first appeared in print in 1968. Apparently not much noticed then, it received the renewed attention when reissued in 1975 as a Thames Television film. Response was positive. Since then the book has been re-issued in hardcover and paperback in England and is due for publication by Holt, Rinehart & Winston in the States in October.

"Impudent dash" indeed. At a time when the common view of homosexuality was hardly positive ("it was thought to be Greek in origin, smaller than socialism but more deadly — especially to children"), Quentin Crisp could be found moving in full and conspicuous sail through the streets of London, a delicate lacquered hand parting the way before him, flaming hennaed locks flowing slightly behind. After a difficult and restless drift through adolescence he had become acquainted with the young men in Soho cafes and street corners who were "on the game," hustling, "a pastime" by which he was very innocent indeed not to catch the meaning of the mannequin walk and the stance in which the hip was only prevented from

total dislocation by the hand placed upon it. I took to them like a duck to ducks."

Crisp joined this layabout world and shared the emphasis of its members on homosexuality. "What had been a burden became a cause. 'I felt that the entire strength of the club must be prepared to show its membership card at any time,' he says, 'and to a nature as dramatic as mine, not to deny rapidly because to protest.' With make-up and manners he declared his sexuality for all the world to see.

The courage involved is obvious, for the world was not always ready to be amused. Police kept beating and arresting the flamboyance that might give their game away, would ease Crisp gingerly out the door; straight society was, of course, often less delicate in its objections.

But also obvious is a broad streak of arrogance and narcissism ultimately rooted in unhealthy self. Quentin Crisp looked at no one without invitation. The Thames Television film played this as a rather positive indication of self-sufficient aloofness from the world. But the aloofness grew from fear — a glance at the wrong person might provoke nasty reactions — and the fear was reinforced by a deep-seated belief in his own inferiority. Commenting on a street



Quentin Crisp

beating, he says that if forcing him to accept their superiority was his attackers' aim, "then all those street brawls were a complete waste of time. I regarded all heterosexuals, however low, as superior to any homosexual, however noble."

Being a creature of his time and place he could hardly have felt otherwise. wonder is that this self-contempt could be turned around and directed into a positive (though admittedly dangerous) assertion of his state of being. Crisp intentionally put himself outside the realm of conventional "respectability" but demanded at the same time that his existence be noted and dealt with. It was from this outside point of view — ultimately from his plinth as *The Naked Civil Servant*, a life-class model in state-run art schools — that he observed the world and came to his pointed conclusions about it.

There is courage here, and the fact that Quentin Crisp had to fight the battle for respect within himself as well as with the world around him doesn't diminish it. "To survive at all," he says, "was an adventure; to reach old age was a miracle. In one respect it was a blessing. In an expanding universe, time is a good bet for the outcast. Those who once inhabited the outskirts of human contempt find that without changing their address they eventually live in the metropolises."

It's a good bet for the metropolis, even having accepted him as a tenant, is not about to escape Crisp's continuing sardonic observations.

by Rick Bebout

Another Kind of Love

Richard Woods

Thomas More Press, 1977, \$3.95.

The Homosexual Question

Marc Oraison

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977, \$4.95.

Am I Running with You, God?

Malcolm Boyd

Doubleday, 1977, \$5.95.

There is grave danger of a political alliance between fundamentalist Protestants and moralistic Catholics in a crusade for sexually repressive legislation. Appealing to irrational fears and the moralistic authoritarianism of large numbers of people with meaningless lives, crusades to "morally regenerate" North America have already begun. The first task is to "root out" pornography and homosexuality.

In this context organizations of gay Christians have an important part to play, and the writings of priests criticizing the traditional teachings of Christianity about homosexuality are weapons to undercut religious legitimizations of hatred and holy wars with our society. Visions of liberation and accounts of homosexuality which some of us may find inadequate can still be useful. We must liberate ourselves, we must liberate Christianity to do for us. What we can expect Christian spokespersons to do is to get the Churches off our backs and to fight prejudice and discrimination. By that criterion even Oraison's muddled book may have some good effects.

Woods' book goes far beyond this. Writing from six years experience ministering to the Chicago gay community, Woods has produced a lucid, humanistic book outlining for a general Christian audience a positive view of gay people. Although critical of some facets of existing gay communities (self-oppression and exploitation), Woods sees the gay experience as valid, even prophetic of a more humane, less machismo-dominated world. He finds the traditional Catholic conception of homosexuality sinful, and urges the Church to support the struggles of gay people for human rights and social transformation.

Informed by scholarship in several disciplines and by a quest for human liberation, Woods' book has no scholarly pretensions. It is a sane approach to homosexuality, lucidly presented for a general audience unfamiliar with the phenomenon. Such an eminently sane book about homosexuality from a priest must be regarded as an accomplishment, and should be applauded, not sneered at. There is a very large audience that could profit from reading it.

The same cannot be said for Oraison's book. Indeed, I am at a loss guessing what population the book is intended for. Oraison does agree with Woods that the traditional Catholic approach (in theory and in practice) to sexuality is untenable, and that gay people are not sick, depraved, immoral, defective or unnatural. And the pastoral approach he advocates in the last chapter of the book is reasonable. But the "theory" of homosexuality or which it is based is fundamentally unsound — in so far as it is intelligible.

Oraison is a French psychiatrist, priest in that order. His thoughts on homosexuality are based on "many years of clinical experience, on conversations and even friendships with homosexuals" and on reading his own writings (the only one other than himself). Whereas Woods writes from experience fighting injustice with the gay movement, Oraison writes from the experience of trying to cure homosexuality and from a rejection of gay liberationists. A champion of an earlier era, Oraison, like Cory Sagarin, is embittered by a new, bold generation rejecting his wise leadership. Also like

Sagarin, his defense is name-calling (all militants are "neurotic") and incoherence.

The incoherence of the book is indicated by the location of a chapter entitled "Observing reality" preceding the one called "What is the Question?" In the former chapter he claims to want to describe the "realities" of gay experience, but he selects examples very tentatively. Other psychiatrists in recent years have recognized that the people who make up the sample are a biased sample of the total gay population. Oraison, however, is not among those who have grasped this simple point of scientific methodology. Worse, he chooses a biased sample of an already biased sample when ostensibly showing diversity. He recounts snippets of six cases who were "cured" of homosexuality, two that managed to remain "aim-inhibited" (i.e., unconsummated), two sick gay criminals, one sick straight criminal, and two others who eventually sexual orientation is not mentioned. In only one of these cases was there more than mutual masturbation. Some diversity! Much later in the book he describes several well-adjusted gay relationships, but these are not part of the diversity, not part of the chapter on "reality."

Oraison claims to be a scientist, but I can see no evidence to support this claim. In most of his case histories he presents his guesses about what happened after his encounter (this despite his criticisms of others for not following up their "cures"). Sometimes he invents hypothetical examples, since his twenty years experience has not presented him the examples needed by his theory. In addition, he treats some of the most controversial Freudian hypotheses (e.g., penis envy) as well established scientific laws. He makes sweeping generalizations without presenting even impressionistic evidence to support them. For instance, he believes that the incidence of homosexuality in prison is higher than in the general population, and he purports to have done a study about it, but does not tell the reader anything about the study except his own beliefs. Surely impressionistic rates are reportable? In sum, the book is a ramble — conceptually and methodologically.

Malcolm Boyd's book is not centrally concerned with homosexuality. It is a set of meditations, two of them (23 and 27) concerned with gay people — in the first "them" and in the second "me." In a way it is good that he can so matter-of-factly mention he is gay in the midst of devotional meditation. It is an adverse topic (of which I speak in the predominant one), but one is left to wonder what — if anything — being gay means for Boyd. He spoke on the subject at a recent literary convention, but the speech is not here.

The book is full of social concerns and a form of Christianity in which self-acceptance plays an important part. Obviously, the book is not a serious devotional literature, and I can't imagine anyone being harmed by *Am I Running with You, God?*

by Stephen Murray

Contributors

Rick Bebout is TBP's new office-copier, an earnest refugee from the refuge from the rat on Grubbs. Jackson is a Toronto writer with a soon-to-be-published collection of dance criticism. Jan Kowalewski is an MA student in Linguistics at York University. Ilona Lurie is a 21-year-old civil servant, disc jockey and LOOT member pining to be an artist. Peter Millard teaches English at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Stephen Murray is an instructor in religious studies and a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Toronto. Stuart Russell, a former member of the LSA, is a Montreal gay activist and sociology student at McGill University.

Words and Women

New Language in New Times
Casey Miller and Kate Swift
Anchor Books, 1977, \$2.75.

Language is a human activity that is universal and is so seemingly unconscious that many of the choices we make in speaking are rarely questioned. *Words and Women* is a book that takes a close look at the power structure inherent in some of these choices, and jars the reader into examining assumptions commonly made about the language in everyday use. The authors are free-lance writers, not linguists, and as a result the book is readable and absorbing for the non-specialist, while at the same time being based on a sound linguistic framework.

Beginning with the most obvious instances of the patriarchal nature of language — the traditions through which names are passed on from one generation to the next — the authors trace similar sexual imbalances in such aspects of language as the ambiguity in the use of "man" as a generic term for humankind and as a term distinct from "woman"; gender, where the male is so often taken to be the norm and the female a sub-species, resulting in such title and condescending connotations as "poetess", "authoress" and "usherette"; semantic polarization, where words associated with the male come to have positive connotations while those referring to the female become negative; and religion, where the masculinity of God is so often assumed in the nature of the language used to describe a Supreme Being. The linguistic history behind these ideas is not forgotten, and words are traced etymologically to show that a word like "homosexual", now often taken to refer exclusively to men because of the association with the coincidentally similar Latin word "homo", derives in fact from the Greek root "homos", meaning "the same".

Ridding the language of sexism and sexual stereotypes is seen by many people as trivial and unimportant in the

face of greater inequalities and injustices, and impossible because of the way in which language evolves. But the authors are quick and convincing in pointing out how important language is in the development of self-image. The language which we use, as well as the language used to describe us, determine to a great degree who we are and how we perceive ourselves.

In addition to pointing out areas of discrimination and inequality, the authors manage to describe reasonable ways in which the language is changing, and being made to change by sensitive and committed people, to reflect a broader vision of sex roles and human possibilities. All this is done in the book with good humour and intelligence that persuade and convince rather than alienate.

Gay people are doubly oppressed by the sexism and sex role stereotypes rampant in everyday language. By bringing these imbalances to awareness and outlining viable alternatives in the language, *Words and Women* provides another avenue towards greater equality and dignity for all of us.

by Jean Kowalewski

Homosexuality

Bibliography
Supplement, 1970-1975

William Parker
Scarecrow Press, 1977, \$12.50

What intriguing titles are listed here: "Awareness of the Back of the Body and Homosexual Impulses," "Arousal From Sleep of Male Homosexuals" and (this one, on homosexuality among Australian Aborigines, sounds both fabulous and touching) "Aboriginal Naivete".

The book is a follow-up to Parker's earlier *Homosexuality: A Selective Bibliography of Over 3,000 Items*, which covered materials written in English through 1969. There are comprehensive sections on pamphlets and documents,

theses and dissertations, and articles in religious, legal and scientific journals; more selective coverage is provided for newspaper articles and pieces from what Parker calls "Homophile Publications." Books and articles in books are listed too, of course, and other valuable though not strictly bibliographical items include lists of films, TV programs, audio-visual aids and US laws and court cases.

In his preface, Mr Parker remarks that "the content of this Supplement differs from the original volume in the following ways: there is less emphasis on homosexuality as sin, sickness or crime, and more on homosexuality as an increasingly acceptable life style; there is less emphasis on homosexuals as offenders against society and more on homosexuals as a minority group struggling to acquire the status and liberties enjoyed by other groups; and there is less emphasis on the views of 'experts' and more on the views of homosexuals themselves."

If one wished to find fault with a careful and painstaking job of research, one might wish for more articles from Canadian and British gay periodicals, or complain that the only three articles listed on "sadism and masochism" all express attitudes rather negative to both S/M and gays.

But there appear to be a minimum of the kind of errors that seem unavoidable in bibliographies of this sort ("John Home Burns, An Appreciative Biography" does pop up instead as "Autobiography").

Together with its companion volume, this fine work should remain a standard reference book for years to come.

by Ian Young



Touch Me

Gerald Arpino
City Center Jeffrey Ballet
Artpark, Lewiston, NY

Gerald Arpino has always borrowed heavily from other choreographers, from Corrali and Perrot on down to Jerome Robbins, so there's no reason he shouldn't lift a few ideas from Alvin Ailey, but to borrow in such a bold-faced fashion as he has done in his new ballet, a solo called *Touch Me* is — well, bold-faced.

Soon after the curtain rises, the dancer Christian Holder, enters wearing what I would have to describe as a reject from the "Wading in the Water" section of Ailey's *Revelations*. The costume consists of a pair of pleated trousers with legs so wide that they look, at first sight, like a skin. Holder is required to play with these trousers a lot, lifting the legs up from the hem to the sides, butterfly-style, and so on, but the effect has none of the sincerity or ingenuousness of the sweep of white skirts and the billow of white parasols in *Revelations*.

The choreographer obviously intended the ballet to be an exploration of black soul. The only things genuinely black about it, however, are the music, a bluesy horn song by the Reverend James Cleveland and the Charles Ford Singers, and Holder. Arpino's lack of understanding of his subject is evident, I think, in the impoverished movement vocabulary he has used, amounting to a barrage of clichés: wide, propeller-like arm movements, shimmering on the knees and much rolling about passionately on the floor. In fact, Holder spent so much time on the floor in a passion, swathed in his white trousers that I began to suspect the fervour Holder was going through was far from religious. The way he caressed his shoulders and chest with the trouser legs, his abdomen tensing and subsiding spasmodically, made me think of bedsheet and masturbatory fantasies. And, of course, it's really what *Touch Me* is for Arpino.

Arpino is forever plunging his hand

ELECTRIC ART

Michel Proulx

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October



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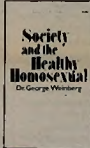
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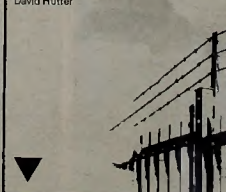
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into the grab-bag of hot topics and pulling out just the one needed to stanch the insatiable craving of his fans. And always with the same result: they're excuses to show off good-looking men in flattering, usually brief attire. Lately he's even taken to retelling the Greek myths with a modern slant and plenty of bare ass. Why the hell he doesn't just give us a stagelife, or even two or three men getting it on together in a scene as beyond the Joffrey's audience would hardly be turned off if he did! We get the homoeroticism anyway, but repressed, fugitive, apologetic, and, delivered so compulsively, it's no doubt blurring Arpino's artistic vision so that he doesn't know what he's creating.

Black soul, as reliable a hot topic as any for now, while New York choreographers, was an obvious mark for Arpino, too, and, with the formidable presence of Christian Hocker thrown in, he probably thought *Touch Me* would be a surefire hit. Sad to say, his demon has done him in again.

by Graham Jackson □

Music

Three Gypsies

Casse Culver

Wise Woman Enterprises/Urana Records, 1976, \$6.95.

The Ways a Woman Can Be

Teresa Trull

Olivia Records, 1977, \$6.95.

Women's music is a music made by women specifically for women, to speak directly to women about our lives, our anger, strengths and loves. These two record albums come under that rather general characterization, although they speak in different musical styles and idioms.

Casse Culver has been a musician working in the folk-country tradition for some years. Prior to this album she made a tape of her own concert at the Los Angeles Women's Building in August 1974; it's called (of course) *Casse Culver Live in Concert*. Culver's rich, smooth voice and considerable talents with autoharp, harmonica and guitar are outstanding. On this LP she has some talented help — Margie Adam, Maxine Feldman, Kay Gardner and Willie Tyson, among others.

Besides "Three Gypsies" (the title

song) there are several other good songs. A big favorite is "Good Old Dora," a song written by Casse Culver in 1975. This is a stirring, lively work about the singer and Good Old Dora (G.O.D.) becoming strong, independent, able to change things and able to be changed.

Another memorable song performed well is "Don't Put Her Down." This is a feminist attack, put succinctly in simple lyrics, on the ways men use, then abuse, women. "Three Gypsies" is a song with a catchy lift to it about three women and/or three aspects of women.

One fault is that this record seems more like Culver and group than Culver with group. Another flaw is the quality of the recording. Must it sound so flat, with little differentiation of the various sounds? It is in glaring contrast to the crisp, well-learned job Olivia Records did on the Teresa Trull album. After looking at the engineering, producing and writing credits at Wise Woman Enterprises/Urana Records, I suspect it's a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth.

The Ways a Woman Can Be is Teresa Trull's first record. She too worked professionally, singing with a rock and roll band while (as the blurb on the liner goes) "the blues kept her secretly sane." Most of the songs were written by the artist, and all are sung in her elastic voice, stretching and soaring over the notes without audible effort. Trull is primarily known for her vocals rather than for her instrumental expertise.

There are a lot of accomplished pros helping out, like Jerane O'Brien and Linda Tui Tillery of the now-defunct "Be Be & Koko," June Millington, formerly of "Fanny," and Meg Christian as well as some very good "unknowns."

Permeating this record is a jazz-blues-swinging flavor, most clearly expressed in the horns, bass and piano. It can be heard in songs like "I'd Like to Make Love With You" (by Margate Sloan), where the horn section underlines the vocals, or like "Sister Love You" (by Ronnie Shannon). One more honky-tonk plunk makes "Woman-loving Woman" and "Gimme Just a Little Bit More (Or a Little Bit Less)" crackle with life.

Most impressive, I felt, was "Woman-loving Woman," which Trull claims she wrote as "a sing-a-long dyke stomper." There is a lush chorus of several voices and good acoustic slide guitar work. The percussion and piano add just the right touches.

by Iona Laney □

Both records are available from Olivia Records, P.O. Box 70237, Los Angeles, CA 90070.

The Ivory Tunnel



Doug Wilson (right) and Doug Knott

Small Press Books

Walter Jenkins, our more ancient readers will remember, was an aide to Lyndon Johnson who, during Johnson's presidential campaign, rose to be a name in the news by getting caught in a YMCA washroom doing unchristian things with another gent. After the scandal blew over, so to speak, Jenkins was given a nice job on the LBJ properties in Texas. But who was his pick-up and what became of him? According to John Mitzel, in *Some Short Stories About Many People I Don't Like*, Jenkins' trick "was working the second string off-the-street wash-and-tint jobs at a franchise beauty parlor in Arlington." Having long since fled to San Antonio, the beautiful tells all in an interview with Mitzel: "You would have thought no-one had ever scored with some number in that booth before. I usually took a slooping bag along with me and the john stands in the bag. That way no-one sees two pairs of legs doing it behind the door. All they hear is a very noisy shopping bag. Ha-Ha!"

Mitzel's breezy style and caustic satire invite comparison to Nathaniel West and Gore Vidal, and his new collection is full of savagely amusing pieces. "Bowing A-ley Back to America's low echelons at play," and "The Last Piece of Trade in America," set in a future when the whole continent has "gone fluffy."

A piece about Jack and Jackie Kennedy's domestic brutalities is overdone and the ugliness blunts the satire. Overall, though, a clever and funny book. It's available from Man/ast Destiny Books, P.O. Box 57, Dorchester Center Station, Dorchester, MA 02024. A bargain at \$3.

No-one could be further from the slangy, raunchy approach of John Mitzel than his fellow New Englander Horatio Colony, whose elegant poems and verse plays, published by a small Boston press, have never received the attention they deserve. One recent book, *The Antique Town*, reminded me of the Canadian poet James Reaney's lush and evocative *A Suit of Nettles*. In his latest, *The Emperor and the Bee*, Boy Colony returns to classical times, this time to the Emperor Nero whom Colony depicts as doting on a beguiling and amoral creature, half boy, half bee, while the court intrigues around him. Verse plays are an oddity in 1977, but Colony is clearly unconcerned about fashion. *The Emperor and the Bee* Boy is \$4.95 from Branden Press, 221 Columbus Ave., Boston, MA 02116.

Doug Wilson's *The Myth of the Boy* (\$1, Stubblejumper Press, Box 1662, Saskatoon, SK) is as uneven as most first books are. Too many of it (poems suffer from unnecessary line-breaks that give an otherwise quiet small verse a ring of portentousness. Some of the pieces are very slight or simply not careful enough, but there are enough treasures here to make the collection well worth while. "Ghosts of old lovers," "his hands hold me," and "I dream often," show a craftsman's control over both language and material, and there are some happy and inventive images: "I have become a chameleon/lost in a rainbow" and "I have given away my heart and soul/and once even my mind...the mind/mistaken for a monkey puzzle/has been returned."

The central story of Robert Bellucci's novel, *A Wolf in the Fold* (\$7.75, Carlton

Press, 84 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011), is a college romance in which nothing very much happens. Dramatic interest is consigned to a sub-plot about a student who is caught plagiarizing a thesis for his term paper.

Complexity and ambivalence apparently do not appeal to M. Bellucci. One set of characters are the good guys: the handsome, masculine young homosexual couple, the imperious Spanish professor whose rudeness is supposed to be aristocratic, and the professor's brother, an understanding priest. These are all ramonita Catholics or Catholic sympathizers, they know that the Spanish Inquisition was really a good thing. Then there are the bad guys: the bad guys are Jewish, physically repellent, racist (I) and dishonest. Socialists are depicted as hysterical, Gypsies are unscrupulous beggars and chicken-stealers.

Perhaps the offensive crudity of all this derives partly from religious simple-mindedness: one cannot help noticing that there is no whisper of the Church's view of what our two heroes are up to. The question of what to do with the lovers after they're settled in together is resolved by an old-fashioned tragic ending. The surviving party finds consoling a Jewish boy, not altogether a dead loss, one or two minor characters could have been quite interesting if more work had been applied to them. But Bellucci has a long way to go — and not only in technique.

Poet-filmmaker James Broughton was brought to the attention of readers of the gay press with a recent profile in *The Advocate*. His latest film, *Together*, was made with his Canadian companion Joel Singer. I haven't had the opportunity to see any of Broughton's films (which he's been making for almost thirty years) but some of the stills in his new book *Seeing the Light* (\$2.50, City Lights Books, 1562 Grant Ave., San Francisco, CA) look magical, recalling his admired master Celiaque.

Seeing the Light is a book of sayings and short texts about film and filmmaking. Broughton's writing, here and in his other new books, *Odes for Odd Occasions*, poems 1954-1976 (44, Manrood, Box 952, San Francisco, CA 94060), strikes me as rather pedestrian, sometimes pedantic and pompous. Far too often the dead meaning of contrivances sinks the poetry.

Both Norman Richards' *DA (days after acceptance)* (\$3, from Triton Press, Boulder Creek, CA) and Percy Rhea's *Light Time* (\$3.50, Broken Dreams Inc., 365 Madison Ave., Albany, NY 12210) ruminate on the theme of the sensitive young man oppressed and alienated by hard, cynical New York. Richards' poems here are an advance over some of his early work, but neither of the books displays the poetic skill necessary to redeem their unrelentingly negative view of life. *Light Time* benefits by the tenderness of some of Susan Kirschbaum's poems and drawings.

Two small books of poetry on American Indian themes: Will Inman's *Voice of the Beech Orchard: A Shaman Song* (\$1, Manrood) and Maurice Kenney's *Horror Poems of Home* (\$1.50, Blue Cloud Quarterly, Marvin, South Dakota) about the author's childhood and friendships in the Mohawk Nation and the white encroachments on the Indians' homeland. Both Inman and Kenney are regular contributors to the gay press.

by Ian Laney □



Teresa Trull

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October

In one shot, leather is on the left side of the frame, jumpsuits and styled hair on the right. Irrelevant details? That's what images are made of. True-to-life? Whose?

Continued from page 15.

Richard Benner: "It's always scared me a lot that *It's Outrageous!* will play unintentionally into a straight stereotype — now I know what being gay is about. It's about being a hair-dresser and learning to talk like Bette Davis — but there are other gay characters in the film who are as far removed from the drag scene as you can get. I hope that starts to balance out that assumption. Every foot of film that shows any gay audience or extras, gay kids, is meticulously going the other direction from transvestites." The other direction? Benner says: "Just sort of a neutral normalcy, not strikingly gorgeous and not strikingly ugly." The movie says: aside from the strikingly fashionable disco crowd, which is no more than background, sex roles are clearly etched in the images. "The other direction" from the female impersonators is most clearly seen in the stud hustler (I made the back cover of *The Advocate*), the leather cab-driver-agent (keys on the left side, Active-Dominant — he fights for the contract with the club manager, Robin signs), and the leather-demi-tattoo line-up in the NY bar. In one shot, leather is on the left side of the frame, jumpsuits and styled hair on the right. Irrelevant details? That's what images are made of. True-to-life? Whose?

When the hustler demands his money from Robin, claiming "we never make it with drag queens even on business, this is a favour," each of us has the option of identifying with him or feeling sorry for Robin, or for both of them. Benner leaves Robin at the bottom of the "sexual totem pole" and so does. One of the most potent features of skillful image-making is the latitude of option or interpretation it allows. Thus when a female impersonator scorns a gay hair-dresser (male) who has scorned drag queens, we can painlessly take either side, or neither, as Benner appears to do. The cathartic distance works as well for us as it does for heterosexuals, as well for film-makers or audience. But sympathy is no substitute for critical insight, even less for action. It is terribly tempting, unfortunately, at the b.o.

The gay critic quoted earlier wrote: "In *Outrageous!*, gayness is a normal, ordinary feature of life and neither the characters nor director Benner give it a second thought... It's a bravissimo accomplishment." Shall we say a difficult one? "Gayness is a normal, ordinary feature of life." Is it of yours? It certainly isn't of mine. Somewhere-over-the-rainbow, maybe, but not just yet. We've all been waiting for movies in which we aren't victims, works that state clearly and defiantly that our problem isn't homosexuality but the irrational fear and hatred that are organized against us. Dehumanizing our images without empowering them will leave us in a quiet limbo on contemporary screens. Is this where we want to be?

The one normal, ordinary feature of our lives, surely, is oppression, the need to disarm our oppressors, to arm ourselves against them. We are alive, distinctly alive at the moment, because of our realization of this. How can any image of us that we construct ourselves exclude it without suggesting that we are either very egocentric or simply helpless in the face of "the real world"? Our legendary bitch humour — that made a hit of *Boys in the Band* that will do the same for *Outrageous!* — why is it turned forever inwards in these works? Richard Benner sought to touch his audience with humour, and he does, but who is laughing with or at whom, and to what effect? We can drown in our laughter, in images of impotence.

For Robin Turner three things matter: "sex [of which, according to the film, he's going to get very little], movies and my career." That's it. And Liza. Once he's ditched the hairdressing business, or got ditched, as we knew he must because we've all seen *A Star Is Born* or some facsimile, he slips into an almost hermetically-sealed world in the clubs. The audiences gay and straight love him first time out, then he's a star — what else is there? Craig Russell's real life isn't like that. In the short story that inspired *Outrageous!* Margaret Gibson based the character Robin on her perceptions of Craig Russell's real life. Russell says some of the stars he meets treat him "with immense rudeness," not as an equal, not as a skilled, original hard-working professional entertainer, but as a "fringe caddy." Benner says "He's slow to trust people. He's very aware of how people look upon what he does and he's incredibly sensitive about it." Sounds just like us. Craig Russell has a battle to fight, possibly a life-long one. But Robin Turner? He's headed for the top. He has that nice agent, those nice boys cheering him on at The Jack Rabbit weekends, those nice hets at The Plaza, The Sands, etc., and that lovable, unpredictable Liza Connors. Meanwhile out in the real world...

What were you trying to say in the movie, Richard Benner? "We all can find some sort of happiness or fulfillment by getting beyond what we look upon as our daily life. Robin and Liza rather joyfully take on a fringe life in a waterfront bar in New York. It's trying to say, instead of looking in and back, look out at someone else. Get lost in some sort of bigger hysteria or happiness."

Do we need a gay Love Story? Benner: "What I'd like to do is *Maurice* (E.M. Forster's long-suppressed homosexual novel) I was rich or someone would back it. I think it would be really clever to do a gay love story set in that period, because it's past, it's lush and romantic, it's removed — and then you could avoid all political statements of any kind and in that way make a stronger personal statement: It's sort of putting it in fantasy-land."

We have a huge and mounting waste of useless and harmful images to destroy, at least for ourselves, at least tonight. It would be nice to get along without any at all, with just the few fruits of our senses, nothing vicious, everything immediate, but for the time being we need images to replace the ones we must destroy. We have to build them ourselves, with enormous thought and care. It's a task that can absorb a great many of us for years to come.

In the meantime, by all means go see *Outrageous*. Rex Reed says you'll learn something. □





Since our last cover introduced our 30,000 readers to the *Toronto Sun*, the *Sun* has reciprocated by introducing us to its 390,000 readers. And so, although there was no shortage of trash last month, we've decided to give this column entirely over to the *Sun's* comments on us.

From *Sun* editor, Peter Worthington we got the following:

"Doing immense damage to the cause of homosexual respectability in Toronto is the publication *Body Politic*, which is to homosexual equality rather as *Hustler* is to conventional sex. It is, or has been, an offensive, unwholesome publication.

"This is a publication that graphically describes homosexual acts.

"It is offensive when the Ontario Arts Council gives a grant to the *Body Politic*, and thereby bestows respectability on a sleazy publication.

"Government bodies have no business subsidizing this trash."

And from chagrined T&P contributor and *Sun* columnist Claire Hoy:

"Ever since I wrote some decidedly unfriendly columns earlier this summer about our friends in the homosexual world, I've received many nasty, and some threatening, calls and letters.

"For the most part, these creatures, who like to call themselves 'gay,' don't identify themselves, preferring instead to stay hidden in the closet where they truly belong.

"In the latest issue of *The Body Politic*, the *Gay Liberation Journal*, both myself and *The Sun* (along with *The Star*) are duly slapped by the limp-wristed set for having the audacity to insist that homosexuality is deviant behaviour.

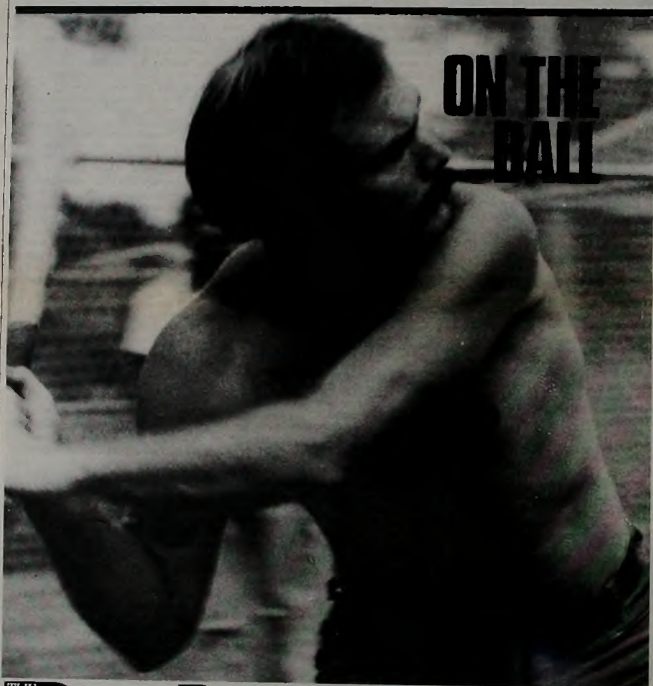
"I am even identified as 'a leader of the anti-gay assault,' for which I thank them.

"But if enough people out there let their elected members know they've had enough, then the politicians will cower and the queens will go scurrying back to their gutters."

A day without the *Sun* is like a day without Trash. □

Homo Hustler gets Sun burn

Well, if you'd just stay inside where you belong...



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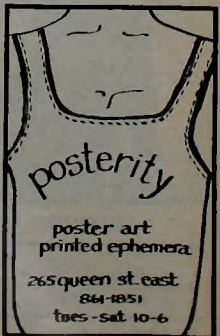
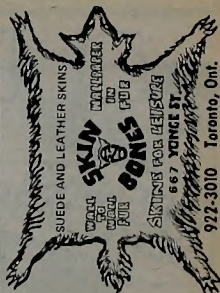
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